### POVERTY, TAXATION,

AND THE REMEDY:

fren Land, fren Thade, free Yen.

THOMAS BRIDGS.

THIRD EDITION



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### PREFACE.

N bringing out a second edition of the "PEACEMAKER," I have thought it advisable to change the title of the book to "POVERTY. TAXATION, AND THE REMEDY," because I have generally found the original title conveys an insufficient idea of the nature of the subjects with which it deals, and the large and important area of human interests over which it travels. To those who haveread the book, the title is appropriate and adequate, since a general adoption of the views it contains would do more than diplomatic agency to create a unity of interest among the nations of the world, and thus put an end for ever to those terrible warswhich every now and again disgrace the very name of humanity. The favourable reception accorded to the first edition has induced meto bring out another and a cheaper one, in the hope that it may reach a wider class of readers, and thereby help to spread among the people the true doctrines of Free Trade. After more than forty years of labour in advocating the policy of complete and universal Free Trade. as the only remedy for the many evils that afflict society, I have the supreme satisfaction of knowing that the intelligence of the country is gradually but surely becoming convinced of the truth and necessity of that policy. Only by the complete acceptance of Free Trade in its entirety can the great and universal law of liberty act freely in our social institutions; and until this law be unfettered, consequences of thegravest import to the people at large must always ensue. of materials of every kind is an artificial restriction placed alike upon the productive powers of both Nature and man, and a barrier in thepath of progress and development which ought long since to have been swept away. When once the true nature of taxation is known its depressing and deadly influence upon the working classes in every country—it will be impossible any longer to maintain the incubus. is now many years since the late Richard Cobden gave utterance to the great truth that, "the man or body of men who succeeds in abolishing in this or any other country the Custom and Excise duties-will be its greatest benefactor." Great truths come slowly to maturity, and the fruit to be reaped from them is of long growth; and the greatest of all truths, perfect Free Trade, is no exception to the rule. I have endeavoured in these pages to show that the great desideratum of our age is the abolition of all Custom and Excise duties and that such'a policy will lead to political peace, and social plenty.

I have made free use of whatever appeared to me to give greater

emphasis to, or more clearly illustrate my views.

T. Briggs.

### INTRODUCTION.

"THERE is in nature no such thing as a fee simple in land."

"Though his titles have been acquiesced by generation after generation to the landed estates of the Duke of Westminster, the poorest child that is born in London to-day has as much right as has his eldest son to these estates."

"This natural and inalienable right to the equal use and enjoyment of land is so apparent that it has been recognised by men wherever force or habit has not blunted first perceptions. To give but one instance: The white settlers of New Zealand found themselves unable to get from the Maoris what the latter considered a complete title to land, because, although a whole tribe might have consented to a sale, they would still claim with every new child horn among them an additional payment, on the ground that they had only parted with their own rights, and could not sell those of the unborn. The Government was obliged to step in and settle the matter by buying land for a tribal annuity, in which every child that is born acquires a share."—Henry George.

THE only royal road to universal peace among civilised nations is Universal Free Trade, and the only royal road to that is, that we shall have absolute and entire free trade in England both as regards Excise and Customs taxes. This will bring about by gradual and spontaneous self-acting process, Universal Free Trade, and then the "first condition" of universal peace will exist. The enemies of this and every country will be converted into friends, from a selfish point of view, not by the sword, but by virtue of setting free of the use of the plough, the ship, the shuttle, and the locomotives everywhere. various populations will then have their eyes open to the fact that under universal freedom of exchange the world's wealth will be equitably distributed, and that there will be enough for all and to spare. Thus showing that God had created man and endowed him with a selfish propensity for a good purpose, and not for an evil one. Then will all men comparatively, i.e., all who can speak and vote, speak and vote for peace and freedom, and where will then be the power of party, crown, or Government, or its army of diplomatists to resist such a public opinion? The power of peace and war, tariffs and taxation, will then he with the people and not with the Government or party for the time being. As the people become perfect, so will their Government become perfect.

He who wishes wisely and well to British industry, will denounce all taxes upon commodities whether they be of a native or foreign production, luxuries or necessaries, or whether for protective or revenue

purposes.

When I first began to write on the land question (some 35 years. ago) I did not then see my way through the entanglements of the land question further than that there were deep-seated vested interests. in Land resting on a rotten foundation, consisting of rights and wrongs, and duties which must some time, not far distant, be investigated. The landholder class being for centuries the predominating power in the legislature, had been in the habit of making unjust laws by which they were enabled to assert rights (created by their own Acts of Parliament) without being called upon to perform the duties justly inseparable from those rights (so-called). For instance they had undertaken, as a condition of their holdings, to furnish out of their receipts. of rack-rent, &c., the necessary expenses of the State, thereby leaving industry free from tariffs of any kind, but they ultimately managed to gradually throw off his duty from their own shoulders on to that of industry by a system of Excise and Customs duties. At that era their selfishness being so much stronger than their economic knowledge, blinded them to the fact that it was a suicidal policy, as the Herbert Spencers, the Henry Georges, the Lattimers, and a host of other writers. and speakers on the question of Land Reform are proving it to havebeen; and, if other facts were wanting to prove this, the condition of Ireland at this moment can furnish ample data. In Mr. George's. book, "Progress and Poverty" (which can be had from all booksellers), page 327 (large book), quoting from Herbert Spencer, he says: "Had we to deal with the parties who originally robbed the human race of its heritage; we might make short work of the matter." "Whynot make short work of the matter anyhow? for this robbery is not like the robbery of a horse, or a sum of money, that ceases with the It is a fresh and continuous robbery, that goes on every day and every hour. It is not from the produce of the past that rent is drawn; it is from the produce of the present. It is a toll levied upon labour constantly and continuously. Every blow of the hammer, every stroke of the pick, every shot of the shuttle, every throb of the steam engine, pay it tribute. It levies upon the earnings of the men who. deep underground, risk their lives, and of those who over white surges. hang to reeling masts; it claims the just reward of the capitalist and the fruits of the inventor's patient efforts; it takes little children from play or from school, and compels them to work before their bones are hard, or their muscles are firm; it robs the shivering of warmth, the hungry of food, the sick of medicine, the anxious of peace. debases, and embitters, and embrutes.

"It crowds families of eight or ten into a single squalid room; it herds like swine agricultural gangs of boys and girls; it fills the gin palace and groggery with those who have no comfort in their homes;

it makes lads who might be useful men candidates for prisons and penitentiaries; it fills brothels with girls who might have known the pure joy of motherhood; it sends greed and all other evil passions prowling through society as a hard winter drives the wolves to the abodes of men; it darkens faith in the human soul, and across the reflections of a just and merciful Creator draws the veil of a hard, and blind, and cruel fate."

"The property that a man has in his own labour, as it is the original foundation of all other property, so it is the most sacred and inviolable. The patrimony of a poor man lies in the strength and dexterity of his hands, and to hinder him from employing this strength and dexterity in what manner he thinks proper, without injury to his neighbour, is a plain violation of this most sacred property."

—"Wealth of Nations," book 1, chap. 10. That Customs and Exciseduties tend both directly and indirectly to violate this sacred property,

it is the purpose of the following pages to demonstrate.

When I wrote my Model Budget, some seven years ago (see page 55 in this book), the Nemesis had not then been so generally felt, and ten per cent. tax would have sufficed upon land and other realised property for the Imperial revenue. But since that time the shrinking of values and profits has rendered it necessary to take as a basis fifteen, or perhaps twenty, per cent. now, from the annual income of land (as originally intended by Act 4 William and Mary, 1692), to cover the present extravagant expenditure of the State. Perhaps the landed interest will listen to the voice of warning when it is too late; when they find their land, so to speak, slipping from under their feet. It has recently been a fashion to speak sneeringly of the following extract from one of Cobden's speeches. "That we had as much right to doubt that the sun would rise to morrow morning as we have to doubt that in ten years after we had set the example of perfect Free Trade, the whole civilised world would follow our example." The true answer to this is, that we have never set the example, Let us do this, and the peoples will then abolish Customs and Excise taxes everywhere, and men may everywhere say with the people of this country, I love my home, I love my country, I love my fellow citizens; my home is Great Britain, my country is the World, and my fellow citizens the dwellers therein. There is an absurd theory that luxuries ought to be taxed, but if this theory be sound we ought to include all luxuries in order to be just. What right have we to grumble at Providence for the weather damaging our crops when we, by our fiscal laws, waste fifty or sixty millions sterling a year in order to put eight millions into the treasury?

### PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

SINCE the publication of Henry George's works and the propagation of his Land Gospel by his lecture campaign in Great Britain, the eyes of great numbers of people have been opened to the fact that the Gospel of absolute Free Trade is bound up with it. Hence the ideal "Single Tax."

The two questions are twin sisters (so to speak) of the Siamese type; to cut them asunder would be the death of both. Hence a new demand has sprung up for Free Trade Literature, and having been sold out I have concluded to issue a third edition of "Poverty, Taxation and the Remedy," with a few additional pages of fresh matter as Preface.

### TRADES UNIONISM.

The time is approaching when the leaders of Trades Unions will recognise the fact that the interests of employer and employed are indentical. Why do not the labourers and industrial capitalist combine against the common enemy of mankind (Landlordism) instead of cutting each other's throats, whilst he is standing by laughing in his sleeve at their folly?

The land law is the root of the Irish difficulty. Capital and Labour are in the same boat as victims of Landlordism. Civilization will never be a reality in any country until this fundamental principle be recognised and acted upon.

"The land shall not be sold for ever, the land is mine, saith the Lord, Ye are but strangers and sojourners with me. The land I give to the children of men" through all generations.

Since the malt tax has been shifted from malt to beer (not repealed) I have received reports from several quarters of the beneficent effect, one of which I here cite:—

Mr. H. A. Smith, Baxter's Corn Stores, Victoria Street, Southwold, Suffolk, a rural county, where the farmers and the working classes practice home brewing. He says, before the tax was shifted from malt to beer "I sold" I bushel of malt, I lb. of hops, 12s. 6d. After the shifting of the tax I sold I bushel of malt, I lb. of hops, 5 stones of flour, 12s. 3d. Showing that the poor get 5 stones of flour in addition to their bushel of malt and I lb. of hops for 3d. less cost.

T. B.

Correspondence between Thomas Briggs and Sir James Caird, K.C.B., on the Question of Relative Cost of Emigration v. Migration.

PRICE 8 STAMPS, POST FREE.

## STATE-AIDED EMICRATION versus STATE-AIDED MICRATION.

The Editor of the Financial Reformer.

"SIR,—You will doubtless remember that about July, 1883, Lord Derby suggested a scheme for sending 10,000 families to America or Canada, but the matter fell through on account of the Canadian Government declining to accept the boon, or to guarantee the repayment of the £1,000,000 which was to be advanced as a loan, without interest, for the purpose of keeping the 10,000 families alive until their first crop was available. I am anxious that your numerous readers should have put before them the following calculations, in order to show the economic results of the scheme, as compared with the results of migrating the same number of families back from the City slums to the virgin soil of England, Ireland, and Scotland—in fact, the United Kingdom.

"This virgin soil is teeming with plenty, provided it was pierced with spade or plough, giving food and employment to millions of our fellow-citizens, and rendering it unnecessary to send them to foreign lands which bar out our commerce by hostile protective tariffs.

I remember the time when we had three to four millions of agricultural labourers working on the soil, now we have less than a million.

•••	
"Now let us take the cost of transporting them to Am	erica :—
First: 10,000 families, averaging five to each family—50,000 souls—each one costing England £120 to rear and educate	£6,000,000
Second: Cost of transporting them to America, £3 each	150,000 25,000 300,000 2,500,000
	£2,975,000
"The above figures show the approximate cost of 10,000 families to America. Now let us take the approximity migrating them to our old pastures at home.  "First: We will say nothing about the six millions stit has cost to rear and educate them, for that is money speepecially if we send them to a country that will bar us or ing with them by hostile tariffs.  Second: Cost of migrating 10,000 families  (Railway fares) £20,000  Cost of 20,000 spades, 2s. 6d. each  (two delvers to each family on the average) 2,500  Wages for delving 120,000 acres, at  *65s. per acre (average) 390,000  Cost of management, one year 4,000	imate cost of erling which ent and lost, ut from trad-
Total cost of cultivation Third: Cost of harvesting and seed would be about equal to value of the straw.  Fourth: Take the yield of 120,000 acres of oats at 90 bushels to the acre (on heavy clay land I have	£416,500

<sup>\*</sup> At this price the average wage would be 18s. to 20s. per week.

known 104 bushels to the acre), say 10,800,000 bushels at 2s. per bushel Deduct cost as above		ushels, 	or 	£1,080,500 416,500
Gross profit for first year Deduct for rent, say £1 per acre		•••		£664,000 120,000
Net profit	•••	•••		£544,000
Fifth: In the case of migration, nett p In the case of emigration a loss of	orofit 			£544,000 £2,975,000
Strictly speaking, we might add the t	wo bo	ttom li	nes	
of figures together and also the top of	one	•••	•••	£6,000,000
Profit on migration Cost and loss in case of emigration	•••		•••	544,000 £2,975,000
Total cost and loss in case of en	migrat	ion		£9,519,000
"Yours truly,				
	- `			Briggs."

In reply to the above, Sir James Caird writes as follows:-

"DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with your letter, but I am sorry that I cannot agree with you in your anticipations of the superior advantage

of home migration over emigration.

"There is no virgin soil in the United Kingdom that is not employed at present to the most profitable use. For by virgin soil I see you mean the old pastures. Those of good quality cannot be better employed than in the supply of fresh milk for the people at a moderate price. We can import everything else. The poorer quality of old pasture land would not yield, at the outside, more than one-balf of ninety bushels to the acre, which you assume as the produce.

"We have splendid outlets for those of our people who are bardy and industrious enough to push out from the old country, instead of adding to the home competition for labour. I had a long conversation last week with a most intelligent man who has been for four years in Manitoba, and he had the best opportunity of seeing the country.

"The soil varies in quality, but any extent of fertile land, for many millions of people can be had. 150 acres are given free to the head of

a family.

"The emigrants should go out in May, preparation having been made for them by the building of a shanty or wooden house, and by breaking and sowing 10 acres of land with wheat, oats and potatoes. I am speaking of state-aided emigration. The emigrants when they arrive can then look after the growing crops, and harvest as much as will maintain them for the following year, and they must be aided with food during the summer till their own crops are ready.

"Those who can work can help, as they will have it in their power

to earn high wages for the first season.

"The most successful people are the Russian emigrants, who go out as a village of people known to one another, have their wooden houses in a village as at home, are helpful to each other, and cultivate their separate farms around and near to the centre village.

"My friend tells me that people when thus thrown on their own resources become very active and industrious. Even the Icelanders, half fishermen, naturally somewhat lazy in their habits, quickly change

into intelligent and active cultivators.

"I wish we had the charming surplus of sixteen millions shown by your Budget; but why levy 20 per cent. from the poor landlords and 5 per cent from other incomes?

"Yours faithfully,
"JAMES CAIRD.

"Cavendish Hotel,

"Eastbourne, April 24th, 1886.

"P.S.—The winter climate of Manitoba is very cold, many degrees below zero. But the air is generally calm and clear, and then it is pleasant to be out of doors. All work except indoor and attending to the housed cattle is suspended. Everything that can be is got ready for the sudden burst of spring."

"To Sir J. Caird, K.C.B.,
"3 James's Place, London, S.W.

"Dear Sir James,—I have to apologise for not having replied to your letter of the 24th ult. The fact is, I waited till the May number of *The Financial Reformer* came out, as I had sent you a copy of their previous numbers, one of which contained an extract from a letter of the late Mr. Rufus Usher, an eminent author of agricultural works and a farmer of 70 years' standing, who died in harness only about twelve months ago. This extract shows how to treat the old pastures and the arable land, in order to make the most of them.

"Inasmuch as you do not appear to have written to *The Financial Reformer*, I think it my duty, and now take the opportunity of replying to your kind letter of the 24th ult., dated from Eastbourne; and with the same post I sent for your acceptance a copy of my book, 'Poverty, Taxation, and the Remedy,' in the concluding page of which you will find the statement of Mr. Usher, which I endorse from practical experience. I shall also further on give you extracts from eminent authors.

"You say that 'you are sorry you cannot agree with me in my anticipation of the superior advantages of migration over emigration.' From this I assume that you are in favour of the State advancing money to exile the most useful labour to other countries rather than

migrate them back to the land to till their native soil. This is in the face of the fact showing that emigration is a loss to the country of about £10,000,000 in moving 10,000 families alone, while migration leaves a profit of about £544,000 for the first year. Again, you say that 'there is no virgin soil in the United Kingdom that is not employed at present to the most profitable use; those of good quality cannot be better employed than in the supply of fresh milk for the people at a

moderate price; we can import everything else.'

"I say nothing against importation. What we all should wish to see is that nothing shall be wasted. And if we can show that by allowing pasture to be ploughed up every 30 years, and arable laid down every 30 years, is the most profitable to the farmer and good for the country, inasmuch as the quantity and quality of the produce per acre is enhanced thereby, at less cost than the present system of high farming, that there is such an abundance of food so cheap that in place of importing we can sell our own produce at lower prices than any other country can do at a fair profit, and have 12 millons of quarters to spare for export annually-I think we have made out a case for migration.\* As regards 'pasture producing milk for the people at a moderate price,' I once made the same suggestion to a practical farmer, and his reply was as follows: 'I suppose you know that every acre of wheat produces more than eight times of human food than an acre of grass does, and employs three or four times as much labour; that arable farming does rear and fatten three or four times the quantity of stock that the same acreage of pasture will; and moreover, it will enable the farmer to fatten his stock at least a year sooner, and so turn over his money twice as fast.' My own experience enables me to endorse his remarks, therefore I could not answer him; illustration allow me to give you an extract as a further from a small volume entitled 'A Practical Revival of Agriculture,' by Jeston Homfray (Kegan Paul and Co., I Paternoster-square). Mr. Homfray says (page 36): 'As an all-round climate that of Great Britain is unsurpassed. The winter is open, the summer temperate, while rain is an important aid to fertilisation. We want agricultural sagacity equal to our manufacturing penetration. Why should not England and Ireland plough up their exhausted turf as Manitoba is doing, and do what Manitoba cannot-seed down their exhausted arable, and not only feed their population, but become exporters of both corn and meats. The same initial energy lies under our turf, and heavier crops can be got out of it, for we can sow wheat in the autumn (which they cannot), and the yield is heavier when the plant is slowly grown. We have not seven months of frost as they have.' When I was a Cheshire farmer I was prohibited from having more than 16 acres out of 70 acres under the plough at once

<sup>\*</sup> See Rufus Usher's article, p. 214.

under a penalty of £50 per acre; and the general impression I found throughout the whole county was that it was a good principle, inasmuch as it was so difficult and costly to get a permanently good turf after being under the plough a length of time. But as Mr. Homfray says (page 37), 'Happily all difficulties have now been removed by the leading seedsmen (who have been the true pioneers of improvement), who have taken great pains in cultivating and persuading farmers to cultivate for sale selected permanent grasses. But then another hitch occurred. For two seasons the new grass grew luxuriantly, but perished the third. This was found to arise from admitting ryegrass to the mixture, which is a coarse-growing biennial, whose seeds have a strong vegetative power, while the permanent grasses are shy seeders. The ryegrass, therefore, outgrew and smothered the true grasses. The farmers have found that the new turf is keenly relished by the cattle, and has a high feeding power because of the fresh vigour of the new soil. All that is necessary is to see that the pasture and tillage are suddenly counterchanged, and if the farmer broke up the turf with the spade, its perfect cleanliness at starting would enable him to work his farm with fewer horses, and to keep it clean thereafter at little cost, thus recouping him for the extra cost of spade-work over plough in the first preparation.'

"The question is therefore one of fair play. Let us have no obstacle placed in the way of importing anything we need; but, on the other hand, let us have the same liberty for agriculture at home. Why should a British or Irish farmer be fined for putting his land to the best use for himself and the country? Why should he be liable to a fine of £100 and a year's imprisonment for growing an acre of tobacco, especially as the best crop of wheat follows one of tobacco on the same ground?

"As regards 'the poorer quality of old pasture land,' which you say 'would not yield at outside more than one-half of 90 bushels of oats to the acre,' all I have to say is that a farmer in Kent wrote me the other day that last season, after a crop of tares and summer fallow, he had 104 bushels of oats to the acre on a large field of clay land; and if one year's rest will produce 104 bushels, it is fair to assume that 30 years' rest will produce 90 bushels to the acre; moreover it was not proposed that the poorer quality of pasture land should be

operated upon. There are plenty of good acres.

"But, be this as it may, it is only a minor part of the subject; the most important part is as to whether it is wise to drive off by the aid of public funds the people, rather than employ them on the land at home. If State aid they must have, let them by all means be tried under fair conditions at home, and if that does not answer, then let them emigrate at the expense of the country that will benefit by their labour if they are not able to bear their own.

"As regards my model Budget, I should prefer answering your

question in a future letter. Suffice it to say in this, that the poor landlords' income comes to them through the sweat of other people's brow and not their own. For this and other reasons they ought to bear a heavier tax. The facts named in your P.S. are quite enough to prevent an English farmer from leaving his own native turf, except under great oppression and injustice.

"Yours faithfully,

"THOMAS BRIGGS."

What conclusions can we draw from the above facts?

1st. That the landholders have for the last 200 years held the land in trust for the benefit of the common weal.

and. That they have abused their trust, inasmuch as they, being the sole law makers during nearly the whole of that period, have made the law to suit their own sinister interests at the expense of justice to the other classes, especially as regards monopolies of land and taxation. And

3rd. In doing so they have been unwittingly committing a suicidal policy, by forcing the surplus labour into exile to a foreign land, where they have not only barred us out from selling our products by bostile protective tariffs, but they have flooded our markets with agricultural produce, to the ruin of our farmers, and also our own manufacturers, whereas, if absolute Free Trade had been the state of our own fiscal laws, they would have followed our example, and so brought mutual good to both sides of the Atlantic, as universal Free Trade is the first condition of universal peace and plenty.

I remain, Mr. Editor, yours faithfully,

THOMAS BRIGGS.

The foregoing statement shows that in emigrating ten thousand families to America the cost would be close upon £10,000,000; whereas to migrate them to pastures at home, spade in hand, there would be a gain of £500,000 in the first year's operations. And yet our statesmen keep harping on one string (emigration) for the unemployed labourer, not being able to see that it is a suicidal policy on their part. Emigration is a natural operation, and should not be interfered with by the Mother State, and it would be healthy under a perfect free trade policy.

We wish, for their own sakes, as well as for the general wellbeing, to see them inaugurate a plan whereby the fertility of the land of Great Britain will be made threefold more productive than at present without costing more than half as much again as the present system. On the same principle as the office in Westminster for giving information to emigrants, there should be an office in every rural or suburban village or parish, with a stock of spades and picks

R

necessary to supply labourers with tools, and a register of fields on which they can be employed in digging or draining, according to the necessity of the case and the skill of the labourer. We have put down £4,000 per annum for the expense of these offices and superintendence. The occupier or owner of the farm should have the management so far as seeing that he got a fair day's work for a fair day's wage. This plan may or may not be the best, but it is offered as a basis of discussion. Nothing can be of more importance than returning the labour back to the land, to produce the wealth for Britain, that is, under the system now in operation, producing it for other nations, who bar out our commerce by hostile tariffs.

Under this plan 130 millions sterling per annum could be added to the value of our home agricultural produce, without any additional cost, and yet not interfere with imported food, as under the system of absolute Free Trade we could maintain in wealth, peace, and happiness, 200,000,000 of people, whereas the present system produces nothing but millionaires and paupers, discontent and death to the Empire, thus showing that we have nothing to fear from foreign competition or from increase of population at home, since abolition of customs and excise would increase the home demand for useful things to the extent of £100,000,000 annually, and rid us of the

"Bitter Cry" of want and starvation.

T. Briggs.

Mr. Gladstone a short time ago said: "If I were stirring in the question of taxation I should go back to the works and precedents handed down to us by the best time of our history; which, in regard to economy, I consider to be the quarter of a century preceding the Crimean War."

That was the time when "the small body of men under the leadership of Cobden and Bright did more for the honour and glory and greatness of Great Britain than did all the great warriors between

Agincourt and Waterloo."

Coming back to the immediate cause of depression of trade, manufacture, and agriculture in the United Kingdom, I make the following calculations, as to the injurious effects of granting a monopoly of licenses to the large brewers and distillers of publichouses and beer shops. This was making them the tax farmers or collectors of the Imperial taxes, the result being that they pocket 60 millions sterling annually, handing over only 8½ millions to the treasury as the State's share of the plunder:—

In 1878 the consumption of beer and porter alone was 1,117,316,745 gallons, which at the average price, 1s. 6d. per gallon, comes to £83,978,756. By repealing the Malt and Beer tax we reduce the cost to 8d. per gallon retail, at which price the producer and

retailer would reap a profit of one hundred per cent. make the year's consumption come to £35,243,861 £83,978,756, thus showing a saving to the community by repealing the Malt and Beer tax alone of ... ... ... and a further saving of 2d. per lb. on butchers' meat

This would in place of £48,554,895 20,000,000\*

Total saving per annum Now let us assume that the Imperial tax on Malt and Beer is repealed, and the amount be taken direct out of our pockets, like all other just debts, from each according to his means, or better still a tax on land values

£8,554,895

£,68,544,895

It will show a net saving of per annum ... Thus 60 millions being left in the pockets of the millions of consumers, in place of gravitating into the pockets of a few millionaire brewers and distillers (the principal owners of gin palaces), would, in the nature of things be spent in clothing, furniture, better dwellings, &c.; that would give such a spur to the home trade that it would enable all the spindles, looms, anvils, picks, and ploughs to be set in motion, ave, in full swing.

THOMAS BRIGGS.

June 12th, 1880.

THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE,

PREMIER AND CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEOUER.

DEAR SIR,

I have just read your supplemental Budget speech with mixed feelings of satisfaction and regret—satisfaction at finding you had the moral courage to repeal the Malt Tax, regret that you had proposed

to stultify so good a measure by imposing a tax upon beer.

If you refer to the early history of the policy of taxing commodities. which has resulted in so much waste of resources, you will agree with me that the Beer Tax was the original sin in this respect, committed against the good of the commonweal by the landed aristocracy of the time, in order (unjustly) to throw the burden of taxation from their own, on to the shoulders of the industrial classes; the said landholders not knowing that it was a suicidal act, which can only be truly characterised as an act for paralysing the efforts of industry (the source of wealth).

<sup>\*</sup> For the details of this item see pp. 70-71.

You will therefore see, that to put a tax on beer is a retrograde policy, inconsistent with a free trade policy, and calculated to bring discredit on the Liberal cause, and ruin to the nation. Why cannot we return to the national expenditure of 1875, which would save about the same amount as the Malt Tax produces?—this would have rendered it unnecessary to provide a substitute.

I appreciate the great difficulties you have to encounter in the vested interests involved in the reform of taxation, which reform I consider indispensable for the safety of society generally, and heartily

sympathise with you.

I was in hopes you had based your financial policy on the premises that "it is wrong to levy imperial taxes through the consumption of the mouths or backs of the people in the shape of taxing the commodities consumed, whether they be necessaries or luxuries, or whether taxed as for revenue or protective duties."

In this case you would have repealed the Malt and Wine Taxes totally, immediately, and unconditionally as a first instalment, and with the intention of following the policy up until every article of

commerce were free as the air we breathe.

What will be the upshot of the Beer Tax? It can have but one result, viz., the completion of the work of demolition as regards "home brewing," for what Englishman can call his "home his castle" when he has an exciseman looking into his private affairs?

This is the espionage which was dreaded by the farmers, and caused your previous Act for evading the Malt Tax on feeding cattle with malt to become a *dead letter*.

And what does the destruction of home brewing involve? to the commonweal in a thousand ways unseen and unfelt until the mischief is done almost beyond redemption. Home brewing involves home baking, home washing, cooking, &c., &c., and the destruction of home brewing is, therefore, the destruction of the national and natural schools for training the rising generation of female domestic servants and working men's wives to habits of thrift, cleanliness, and domestic economy generally. Moreover, such-like taxes create in the minds of foreigners a feeling that we have no faith in the principles of free trade, or we should carry them out to their logical extent amongst ourselves; hence their reluctance to adopt a policy of free trade in face of the opposition of a class of monopolists among them who profit by the losses of the commonwealth. Mr. Charles Tennant, the author of "The People's Blue Book," tells us that "to put a tax on brewing is like putting a tax on roasting beef," and you know what such a tax as that would lead to. I, therefore, beg to petition you to withdraw the proposal for taxing beer: you have done a noble act of statesmanship in repealing the accursed Malt Tax, do not mar your good work by shifting it from malt to beer; it would be a miserable interchange of wrong for wrong.

I grant you that the wrong you have abolished is as great a one as that which you propose to substitute-by the latter you still leave the cancer that is eating the vitals of the nation, which can never be eradicated by temporising policy. Monopoly is monopoly, whether it be in beer or beef, and as I fancy I have heard you say that "all monopolies are bad," in which I entirely agree, therefore it would be a pity to see you giving to the country such a boon as the Repeal of the Malt Tax with one hand, whilst with the other at the same time you leave the cancer to germinate in the body politic in the shape of a Beer Tax. To show (as an illustration) how the Beer Tax which culminated into a Malt Tax has been operating to the injury of the landowners—the value of land had so depreciated and the value of public-house property has been enhanced; there was a sale of a landed estate near Salisbury, the other day, consisting of 416 acres, freehold, adjoining a railway station, sold by auction at a fraction over £11 an acre, £4,600, whilst side by side with it in the Times was reported a sale of a common public-house lease for some twenty years, which fetched £9,000 odd. The Malt Tax (now the Beer Tax) has been the means of setting up the monopoly of the special interest of public-house owners at the expense of all other interests, the landed interest included. This is protection of the most pernicious kind.

Mr. Lowe, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1873, told a deputation that he was extremely sorry that the necessities of the State obliged us to tax the beer of the poor, and said, "My wish would be that the poor man should have his beer entirely free from taxation, and that, so far from promoting intemperance, would probably serve the cause of temperance. I admit that the tax is a burden on the poor, and that they bear it almost exclusively."—(See

p. 63.)

"The necessities of the State," forsooth! Here I am reminded of the Right Honourable J. Bright's words, viz.—"He who cannot govern England with an expenditure of £70,000,000 a year or less does not deserve the confidence of the people." As regards the loss to the revenue of repealing all these taxes which operate in restraint of trade, you have nothing to fear, inasmuch as the repeal of them will enrich every class of the community to such an extent as to enable them to bear the burden of a 2s. in the pound income and property tax without feeling it to be a burden.

In deep humility, I remain, your obedient Servant,

THOMAS BRIGGS.

UNIVERSAL FREE TRADE THE FIRST CONDITION OF UNIVERSAL PEACE.

THE HOMESTEAD, RICHMOND. SURREY, July 6th, 1880. (Now Langdon House, St. Ann's Hill, Wandsworth, S.W.)

THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P., Premier and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

DEAR SIR,

On the 12th ultimo I ventured to address a letter to you congratulating you on the great event when you announced the repeal of the Malt Tax. I now venture to address you again in the hope that the friendly warning I humbly offer may not be too late to prevent the mischief that will be the result of shifting the tax from Malt to Beer. For the last forty years or so you have been a "Law Maker;" for the last seventy years I have been a "Law abider," and in this capacity I venture an opinion, not entirely from my own experience, but from such reading as Turgot (who was Adam Smith's schoolmaster), Bastiat, A. Smith, Cobden, Bright, Charles Tennant, &c., &c.

The first on this list said, "Taxes on exchanges and on the transactions of society are of an odious nature. The smallest trifle so paid is a subtraction from actual property. Taxes ought to be for the preservation of property, not to prevent its formation." Bastiat says, "Taxes on commodities are violations of property." Mr. Charles Tennant, the soundest modern political economist, was the first to suggest a system of taxation which enables the State to levy its revenue justly and equitably without taxing any article of exchange.

The evils of the Beer Tax may be considered the germs from which the Malt Tax was developed, and for inflicting this Beer Tax on the community in the time of Charles I. the landed interest have to thank themselves for the present state of Ireland, and even the depressed state of agriculture and commerce throughout the United

Kingdom.

Had you repealed the Malt Tax without finding a substitute in the shape of a Beer Tax, you would have done an act of statesmanship which would have included both home and foreign policy, especially if it had been done as a first instalment to abolishing all customs and

excise taxes.

The 10 per cent. suggested on the annual income of realised property, as a substitute for taxes on commodities, would have been a flea-bite of a burden to the landed interest compared to the present state of anarchy and chronic discontent (which may result in the loss of their land rents entirely).

I have the honour to be, Your obedient Servant,

THOMAS BRIGGS.

### SINGLE TAX NEWS.

#### SINGLE TAX PLATFORM.

THE single tax contemplates the abolition of all taxes upon labour or the products of labour—that is to say, the abolition of all taxes save one tax levied on the value of land, irrespective of improvements.

Since in all our states we now levy some tax on the value of land, the single tax can be instituted by the simple and easy way of abolishing, one after another, all other taxes now levied, and commensurately increasing the tax on land values, until we draw upon that one source for all expenses of government; the revenue being divided between local governments, state governments, and the general government, as the revenue from direct taxes is now divided between the local and state governments, or a direct assessment being made by the general government upon the states and paid by them from revenues collected in this manner.

The single tax is not a tax on land, and therefore would not fall on

the use of land and become a tax on labour.

It is a tax, not on land, but on the value of land. Thus it would not fall on all land, but only on valuable land, and on that not in proportion to the use made of it, but in proportion to its value—the premium which the user of land must pay to the owner, either in purchase money or in rent, for permission to use valuable land. It would thus be a tax, not on the use or improvement of land, but on the ownership of land, taking what would otherwise go to the owner as owner, and not as user.

In assessments under the single tax all values created by individual use or improvement would be excluded, and the only value taken into consideration would be the value attaching to the bare land by reason of neighbourhood, &c. Thus the farmer would have no more taxes to pay than the speculator who held a similar piece of land idle, and the man who on a city lot erected a valuable building would be taxed no more than the man who held a similar lot vacant.

The single tax, in short, would call upon men to contribute to the public revenues, not in proportion to what they produce or accumulate, but in proportion to the value of the natural opportunities they hold. It would compel them to pay just as much for holding land idle as for putting it to its fullest use.

The single tax, therefore, would-

1. Take the weight of taxation off of the agricultural districts where

land has little or no value irrespective of improvements, and put it on towns and cities where bare land rises to a value of millions of dollars per acre.

2. Dispense with a multiplicity of taxes and a horde of tax-

gathers, simplify government and greatly reduce its cost.

3. Do away with the fraud, corruption, and gross inequality inseparable from our present methods of taxation, which allow the rich to escape while they grind the poor. Land cannot be hid or carried off, and its value can be ascertained with greater ease and

certainty than any other.

4. Give us with all the world as perfect freedom of trade as now exists between the states of our Union, thus enabling our people to share through free exchanges in all the advantages which nature has given to other countries, or which the peculiar skill of other peoples has enabled them to attain. It would destroy the trusts, monopolies, and corruptions which are the outgrowths of the tariff. It would do away with the fines and penalties now levied on any one who improves a farm, erects a house, builds a machine, or in any way adds to the general stock of wealth. It would leave every one free to apply labour or expend capital in production or exchange without fine or restriction, and would leave to each the full product of his exertion.

5. It would, on the other hand, by taking for public uses that value which attaches to land by reason of the growth and improvement of the community, make the holding of land unprofitable to the mere owner and profitable only to the user. It would thus make it impossible for speculators and monopolists to hold natural opportunities unused or only half used, and would throw open to labour the illimitable field of employment which the earth offers to man. It would thus solve the labour problem, do away with involuntary poverty, raise wages in all occupations to the full earnings of labour, make overproduction impossible until all human wants are satisfied, render laboursaving inventions a blessing to all, and cause such an enormous production and such an equitable distribution of wealth as would give to all comfort, leisure, and participation in the advantages of an advancing civilisation.

The ethical principles on which the single tax is based are :--

I. Each man is entitled to all that his labour produces.

no tax should be levied on the products of labour.

2. All men are equally entitled to what God has created, and to what is gained by the general growth and improvement of the community of which they are a part. Therefore, no one should be permitted to hold natural opportunities without a fair return to all for any special privilege thus accorded to him, and that value which the growth and improvement of the community attaches to land shall be taken for the use of the community.—New York Standard, December 21st, 1889.

### Extract from the Standard, January 8th, 1890.

AND here is a still more striking indication. A second edition of "The Land and the Community" will soon be needed. At the request of Dr. Thackeray, the Right Rev. F. D. Huntington, Bishop of Central New York, has written the following preface for it:—

"Whether measured by the gravity of its intrinsic, economic, and moral claims, by the arguments of its advocates, or by its considerable progress in public favour, the theory which it is the object of the following treatise to support deserves to be understood. To that understanding Mr. Thackeray appears to me to contribute a valuable help, while he meets difficulties and objections with fairness of reasoning and in a temperate spirit. To one class of thinking men this scientific aspect of the work will offer the principal attraction. With others, and they ought not to be few, a yet deeper and larger interest must pertain to the subject because of its practical relations to the Christian religion. Representatives of the single tax doctrine like this author, who postulate their social system on the primal religious ordinance that the earth is the Lord's and not man's, and is only held in trust anywhere by a nation or organised people, cannot separate their political economy from their faith. They believe that the remedies which this law of divine ownership provides go down to the very roots of the manifold evils and wrongs which now afflict, threaten, and endanger society to an alarming degree, and which they believe to be symptoms of a diseased condition rather than the disease itself. Were it otherwise, were the question only political or secular, it might well enough be left in the hands of laymen. Nor is it a question of sentiment, but of what is right in law, human and divine. Ministers of Christ are called and sent for the building up on the earth of a kingdom of justice and love, of righteousness and peace, which is the kingdom of the Son of Man. In that brotherhood of impartial rights, equal privilege, and universal freedom, the only church of which Jesus Christ is the Founder and Master, how would it strike the judgment and intuitions of men if it were now proposed for the first time, private titles to land being yet unknown, to cut up a country or continent into lots large or small and dispose of the whole landed estate, for absolute and permanent possession, to favoured individuals or families irrespective of occupancy or use? In the following pages this inquiry, with others akin to it, is carried back along the lines of authentic history and into the regions of ethical principles, with a firm and evidently an honest hand. F. D. HUNTINGTON.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Syracuse, Epiphany, 1890."

# OPPRESSIVE TAXATION, POVERTY AND THE REMEDY:

FREE TRADE, FREE LABOUR, FREE THOUGHT;

OR.

Direct Taxation the True Principle of Political Economy.

### CHAPTER I.

"Universal Free Trade is the first condition of Universal Peace."

X / ITH a profound conviction of the great truth contained in the utterance of Richard Cobden that forms a sort of motto to this chapter, I venture with respectful earnestness to re-affirm it as a truth, spoken by one of the greatest fiscal and political reformers and benefactors of this kingdom. I am also fully alive to the probability that many persons may be disposed to say that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread;" the same was said of that noble band of men who first mooted the question of free trade in corn, under the leadership of the late Mr. Cobden. Where is the man who had to withstand so much abuse and political hatred as that great statesman, when first he began to agitate the question? Utopian, revolutionist, firebrand, were epithets ever ringing in one's ears respecting him and his fellow-workers in the cause. Nearly the whole press of the country was enlisted on the side of their opponents, and all the power that wealth and standing could bring to bear were arrayed against them. Notwithstanding this. half the battle of free trade was won; I say half, because corn, although only one article, is so important a one, that it may be reckoned of as much value as all the other articles put together. Now, how was this part of the battle against ignorance, prejudice, and selfishness won? Simply by "pegging away" at the enemy, getting up meetings, starting an organ of their own called the League, spreading the truth broadcast throughout the length and breadth of the land, creating an enthusiastic public opinion, which no power (whose cause was not just) could withstand. But all this work required money, and how did they "raise the wind?" Simply by a few noble and generous-hearted patriots joining together as a nucleus—some giving £1,000, some £500, and so on, which very soon swelled (by millions of men joining with pence) up to £100,000, or more, and subsequent history has proved that a better investment never was made for all classes.

Ever since the American civil war we have felt something wrong in the social system. The breaking down of the mainspring of our manufacturing industry (cotton) was the first signal of danger. Black Friday in London, 1866, was the second; and now we have the coal famine, the meat famine, the milk famine, and the next thing we have to apprehend is the labour famine. Labour and capital (twin brothers) are at daggers drawn. England, with all her present, apparent prosperity and inflated trade, seems to all outside observers like a "house divided against itself." Our great statesmen and the public find something wrong, and the social and economic machinery in a wretched condition, but, in the endeavour to approach the cause and adopt a remedy, take hold of every conceivable side of the subject but the right one. Some say educate the masses, so say I; but first educate the statesman and the schoolmaster. Our most distinguished and learned lawmakers are deficient in the first rudiments of political economy, otherwise they would at once repeal all those laws that operate in restraint of trade, to wit, Customs and Excise

Some say build labourers and artisans comfortable and improved dwellings. On this point I will content myself with recommending you to read a pamphlet recently issued by Mr. Martin, the representative of the Artisans', Labourers', and General Dwellings Company, Limited. He has drawn an elaborate and exhaustive picture of the curse inflicted on the working classes, but like most well-meaning but mistaken philanthropists, he fails to recognise the real cause and the proper way for remedying the evil. The remedy he goes in for is one that may be compared to a person pouring into the Thames a bucket of water, expecting therewith to make the noble river overflow its banks. He says (page 4):—"Labour is in mortal conflict with capital; and Communism defying all authority longs to overturn our most cherished institutions. Thoughtful men stand appalled at all this, and seek to avert the threatened dangers by education, social and religious organisation-millions of money spent, but no impression made," &c. Some say International Arbitration will prove a blessing to all nations and all classes, inasmuch as it will settle international disputes, cruelly closing their eyes to the fact that international free trade would prevent international disputes arising, and, therefore, free trade is the "more excellent way." Some say extension of the borough franchise to the counties, which no doubt is a step in the right direction, but which should not be made a stumblingblock in the way of free trade. Others say local taxation is the bane. and the antidote is to be found in shifting the burden from local to Imperial shoulders; which, in other words, is to take a shilling out of one pocket in order to put it into the other. And others, again, say the Game Laws are the sole cause of discord, others the Liquor Laws, and a thousand and one other crotchets which, taken altogether, are not to be compared with the one measure of free trade which I have long advocated, and herein definitely propose for consideration to be brought to the forefront as the question claiming precedence of all

other questions.

But there is another question-trades-union strikes-which come in as the second in importance to that of free trade. As for trades unions themselves, we must deal with them as the inevitable consequences of some gigantic evil, or political economical error. Trade societies are now made lawful, and are good as far as they may be used for mutual help and regulation of prices. But when by gigantic strikes they aim at the destruction of the whole industrial structure of society, by driving from the country capital and labour, something is radically wrong. The representatives of capital and labour can never be consistent whilst they are quarrelling between themselves about a trifling percentage in the price of labour; and, at the same time, they are tolerating with blind indifference the laws which, on one hand, rob the labourer of one-third of his wages under the false pretence of raising the revenue of the State on free trade principles, and on the other, locking up capital, or driving it out of the kingdom to be wasted in war or hostile tarriffs in other nations. The common enemy to society (the fiscal system) is thus saved by those who believe in it, to play off capital and labour one against the other, in order to suit party purposes for the time being. Free trade is not a party question, and, therefore may be adopted by either of the great political parties with perfect consistency.

The great delusion is, that every one thinks this is a free-trade country. The following statistics, taken from a book issued in 1857, will dissipate this delusion; it will show the mockery practised upon the people under the pretence of taxing luxuries. If taxing commodities were a sound policy at all, then I grant that those of a luxurious, of an intoxicating nature, are the right things to tax. The writer says, "At the time of the Commonwealth, the landowners, having become the sole legislators, patriotically freed themselves from the lien which the State held upon their properties. The weight of taxation which should constitutionally have been sustained by the land, was transferred to the products of industry." The result, as shown by the undermentioned figures, proves that we are not the free-trade country we are taken to be, as compared with

other European nations :-

			£ '£
In France the Land Tax yielded			23,250,000)
And Industrial Taxes		• • • •	23,250,000 40,750,000
In Prussia the Land Tax yielded			3,097,000 6,764,000
And Industrial Taxes			3,667,000
In Austria the Land Tax yielded	• • •		7,797,000) 15,497,000
And Industrial Taxes	•••	•••	7,700,000) 15,497,000

Whilst, in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland-

Thus showing that at the above date our industrial taxes amounted to £25,985,712 more per annum than the industrial taxes of three of the most powerful nations in Europe put together. Mr. Lowe told me he had taken off the last vestige of the last food tax when he repealed the shilling duty on corn, not perceiving that even corn was not yet untaxed, for what is malt but corn in a certain shape? And by taxing malt he admitted he was interfering with the operation of the farmers to a serious extent, but said he must have the money. We have shown him how to raise a revenue of nearly eighty millions without taxing a single article of the bountiful gifts of Providence, and without militating against any interest, but, on the contrary, harmonising the interest of all classes.

It was said by an ex-member of the Cabinet, about two years ago, that "that noble band of men, under the leadership of the late R. Cobden, who brought about the repeal of the Corn Laws, did more for the honour, glory, and greatness of England, than all the great warriors from Agincourt to Waterloo." If the half of the work then achieved resulted in such benefits to the country, it remains to be seen who are the men who can find moral courage and patriotic enthusiasm sufficient to finish the work by removing from the Statute Book the Customs and Excise Laws, and give the people the perfect law of

liberty.

He would be a bold prophet who dared to say from which political party they will spring. One thing is quite patent to my mind, viz., to do this great work they must cease to be party men in the common acceptation of the term. This great question stands high above and beyond such political distinctions as those which still play such unseemly and untoward tricks in the realm of politics. Those who take up this question in sincerity and truth must lift themselves far above party strife and petty contentions, and rise to the "great argument" con amore, and then I am perfectly sure that enlightened and persistent efforts will be crowned with national success, and their own heads be adorned with a wreath as unfading in glory as that of Richard Cobden.

We have frequently heard of late that the manufacturing supremacy of Great Britain is in danger, and, if so, why? Is the lack of

<sup>\*</sup> This shows how easy it is for even intelligent Ministers of State to impose a fallacy on their own minds."

commercial freedom the root and cause of the danger? This threefold question involves a problem which ought to occupy the foremost place in all public discussions, whether in or out of Parliament, viz. the problem of commercial freedom. It is a settled conviction with me as the result of forty years' study of the question, that the only way to solve this problem is to untax the people's food and beverages. But this raises so broad a question, and one in which there is so much scope for difference of opinion, that I am resolved to give this work as broad a base as possible. It is not necessary to go into the early history of our cotton, woollen, iron, and linen industry, in this small volume; and, if it were, time and space forbid it. The manufacturing supremacy of Great Britain is like a chain whose links have been forged and joined at long intervals. One of the principal links is cotton, another coal; but the first and foremost is labour. This is like the key-stone of the arch. The strength of the labourer, like the strength of the horse, goes in at his mouth. Our noble lords are beginning to find out that there is a famine in horses in this country, and are taxing there wits to find a remedy; but they are determined to ignore the fact that the country is drifting into a famine of manual labour. Several farms, to my knowledge, during the present harvest\* have been unable to secure a sufficient supply of labour to enable them to house their potatoes. In one farm I visited I saw only two men forking on thirty acres of potatoes, and on asking why more men were not employed, the answer was, "We cannot get them for love or money, though we give 8d. per sack for forking and gathering." Again, our noble lords are also determined to ignore the cause of these evils. Remove the cause, and the evil will spontaneously disappear. Our manufacturers, merchants, and agriculturists, as a rule, find it difficult to realise a fair and remunerative So long as they could (especially i.1 profit on their transactions. textile products) monopolise the use of inanimate labourers—that is. make a man and two boys attend the operations of 2,000 inanimate spinners, doing their work with unerring exactness-things went on smoothly enough, but now that other countries are doing the same, it is high time to look about them. To relieve themselves from the oppressive weight of foreign competition they appeal to the wage list, and find that there is nothing for it but to lower wages. The labourer and artisan do not believe in this mode of setting things square; in their turn they point to the high prices of food and beverages, rent, and fuel, as an overwhelming argument for keeping up wages. This brings us to the significant fact that some twenty-five years ago, when wheat was at the same price it is now, the four-pound loaf was about 21d. cheaper than it is now; it was then 41d., and it is now 7d. average, or somewhere about forty-five per cent. higher. How comes this to pass: seeing there is no Government tax on wheat? The difficulties of the

<sup>\*</sup> The year 1875.

wages question develop themselves in the shape of combinations and strikes and lock-outs, or, in other words, capital and labour (twin brothers) fly at each other's throats, while the authors of their difficulties and dangers (the common enemy of both) look on laughing in their sleeves at their stupidity. The employing classes, and rightly so, are in the habit of reminding the workmen that wages, like all other commodities, are subject to the unerring laws of supply and demand, whilst the employers' organ (Capital and Labour) is dead set against recognising the fact that the "commodities" which have to be purchased with the wages of the toiler are not subject to these laws of supply and demand, and are not allowed by law to be so. lies the gist of the whole question. The law of the land is, therefore, responsible for strikes and lock-outs, and the trades-union leaders, together with the employers' confederation, in their obstinate refusal to recognise that fact, are responsible for the continuation of them. We cannot truly write the history of strikes and lock-outs without showing the Government as the first striker and locker-out. For instance, they raise the imperial nevenue by a tax on the food of the people. leads to the dearness of living, and that leads the people to combine and strike for higher wages, or against lowering them, as the case may be; and this, again, tends to aggravate the evil of dear living to all the people, themselves included. In discussing the cotton industry, it is frequently but most erroneously referred to as being simply and solely a Lancashire question, whereas it is, and would under perfect free trade be felt and recognised as, a universal question. If they turn out a piece of calico at a reduced cost, the world reaps the benefit of the cheap clothing just as much as it would by a bountiful harvest making bread cheaper. It is also a national question. What would this nation be were she to lose her cotton industry? It is this industry that has developed almost all the other great industries. She has already been left far behind by the Continental nations in development of the linen industries. I concur in the opinion of a correspondent of Capital and Labour Journal, September 22, signed J. Bull. He says: "There is no country in the world so exclusively dependent on brains and industry for its life and being as this of England. She has no exportable raw material but coal and iron, and the more of either she sends away the poorer she becomes. In fact, in selling these she parts with her very life's blood. She is great in exchange; as yet almost unrivalled in impressing a high value on the raw materials of others by manipulation and mechanical skill. But in her national and internal resources I know of no country poorer—i.e., in raw material." Mr. Dodson, M.P., observed that "out of 32,000,000 of population she was only able by her native acres to fill the mouths of 13,000,000 or 14,000,000." The same writer (J. Bull) goes on to say that we should "bear in mind that our ports are open and free; that foreign locomotives, hats, boots, yarns, come into our markets and undersell us." Here I must join issue with him. This is a grave

error; our ports are not "open and free." It may be true that the above articles are admitted free, but what about tea, coffee, malt, spirits, wine, tobacco, cocoa, chocolate, chicory, dried fruits, such as currants, raisins, figs, plums, and prunes? These are all, some heavily, taxed. Do we bear in mind that, in consequence of the above taxed articles, the ships bearing the free articles cannot be allowed to enter any harbour without being subjected to frivolous and vexatious delays and demurrage, in having to wait their turn to be overhauled, lest by any means they may have secretly stowed away some duty-paying article. Now all this operates in restraint of trade to such an extent as to add artificially to the cost of everything the consumer uses, whether taxed or untaxed.

It will probably be argued that the few articles taxed are not necessaries, but only luxuries. Granted; but have I not shown that a tax upon one article alone will affect injuriously all other articles, and bear heavily upon the manufacturing and agricultural industries, as handicapping them in the race of competition with foreign industries? I am not advocating free trade in the interest of low wages, but in the interest of economy, peace, and retrenchment, because a system of import duties on foreign produce tends to excite a feeling of hostility between nation and nation, and forces commerce into unnatural channels, the effect of which is to exhaust the mineral wealth of this country, and by artificial means forcing into the hands of foreign rivals our latest improved machinery, besides coal and iron, the only prime raw materials we have; whereas, under a system of entire free trade, our export trade would be textile fabrics, which trade is ours by the beneficent scheme of Nature's universal division of labour. Mr. Gladstone, in his speech at the Hawarden Literary Institution, told us that "man's bodily and material life had wants which were perfectly imperative and indispensable. It is in his choice to a great degree whether he will cultivate his intellectual faculties. It can hardly be said to be in his choice whether he will labour for the supply of his bodily wants, and the wants of those that are immediately dependent upon him." Could there be a stronger argument than that in favour of untaxing the food of the people? Again, he said "that between the years 1790 and 1800 the average wages of agricultural labourers were 8s. per week," comparing that with the present rate of wages-about 15s. per week-in order to show that the agricultural labourer of the present time was in so much better position, and also that Merry England was merrier at the present day than she could possibly be then-forgetting that she had been for some years barbarously and lavishly wasting her blood and treasures, and for fifteen years after this went on doing so to such an extent as to load all future generations with that sore and oppressive burden which is commonly called our National Debt. Mr. Gladstone should have gone 200 years further back, and he would have found that England could afford to be merry at a much cheaper rate than she could either in 1800 or

1875, as the following bill of fare will show. We find in the Lansdowne MSS. that about Christmas, 1508, certain officials of the Court of King Henry VII. dined together at the Star and Garter, Richmond, and at the end of the entertainment the bill was as follows:—"For brede, 12d.; ale, 3s. 4d.; wyne, 10d.; two loynes of mutton, 8d.; maribones, 6d.; poudred beef, 5d.; two capons, 2s.: two geese, 14d.; five conyes, 15d.; one legge moton, 5 lb., 4d.; six plovers, 1s. 6d.; six pigeons, 5d.; two dozen larks, 12d.; salt, 6d.; buter and eggs, 10d.; maiden's gaynes, 12d.; herbes, 1d.; spices, 2s. 4d." Malt was then 4s. per quarter; it is now 70s. Let England abolish Customs and Excise Laws, and she will soon return to the plenty which is indicated by the above tariff. How much more happy would be the lot of the agricultural labourer with his 8s. or even 5s. per week under such a tariff, than 16s. a week would make him under the present state of things.\*

For ten years ending 1872 our national expenditure averaged about £100,000,000 in round numbers annually on two taxed articles—beer and spirits—whose cost to the manufacturers, including raw materials, rent, wages, &c., is a little less than £18,000,000. Suppose we add to this, as fair profit to the trade, £18,000,000, or 100 per cent. Pay the tax direct instead of through the mouth, £24,000,000. Total cost,

profits, and tax, £60,000,000-

First cost Profit, 100 per cent. Tax	. 18,000,000
Total	[60 000 000

which, being deducted from the annual expenditure of £100,000,000, leaves a good balance of £40,000,000 unaccounted for. What becomes of it? This is a hard problem to solve. That it is worse than wasted there can be no doubt; and the sooner the general public are made acquainted with these glaring facts and follies of our fiscal transactions under the shield of so-called free trade, the nearer we shall approach to social and national salvation.

<sup>•</sup> It is true the value of money was higher at that date, but that will not account for the difference by some hundreds per cent.

### CHAPTER II.

"I AM perfectly satisfied that the members of our Government, alternately Whig and Tory, have alike repeatedly committed blunders of a magnitude and grossness that would have utterly ruined the credit, character, and stability of any private firm in the kingdom. This has been done from sheer ignorance, frequently combined with party interests, so that we may say, in the words of Lord Chesterfield to his son, 'See with how little wisdom the nations of the earth are governed.'"—The Thornecroft Papers.

"Customs and Excise Laws counteract the expansibility of the field of human labour; remove these artificial barriers and bless the human race.

"A large empire built up by force of arms out of heterogeneous materials contains in its very composition the seeds of decay. The conquered nations have always proved thorns in the sides of their conquerors. The fall of Spain from her high estate was in no small degree the result of her impotent efforts to retain her hold over Holland and Naples."—BASTIAT.

"Now the most effectual way of preventing war is certainly an open and advantageous commerce between the two nations. Nothing unites like interest; and once our people have felt the sweets of carrying on a trade with France under reasonable regulations, the artifices of Whiggism will have less effect upon them."—BOLINGBROKE.

THAT there is a general lack of clear knowledge amongst members of Parliament, and also the trading and commercial men of the kingdom, of the true principles of Free Trade is patent to all those persons who think soberly about the matter. This manifests itself now on all sides, as it has done in years gone past, so that history is full of evil and untoward results to the Commonwealth.

To illustrate this we need only look at the subject in relation to the Anglo-French commercial treaty as presented to view in 1872. In February of that year the French Government gave notice of the termination of the treaty, with the approbation of the great mass of the French nation. By this act France became free to take any financial course she pleased. She might be as Protectionist as she liked without any fear of reprisals on the part of England, for we would never imitate her in such a suicidal course. Now (six months later) the French Government is anxious to make a fresh treaty with us, and seeks to propitiate us by a declaration that it is not Protec-

tionist. What are the causes of this change? It is well worth our while to understand them. The great mass of the French nation are unacquained with the science of trade, and are bigoted Protectionists, deeply imbued with commercial prejudices against England. Ther fixed idea of a commercial treaty is that of a compact in which one party gains something at the expense of the other; of international trade, that one side loses what the other gains. The treaty with England was, in their eyes, a bargain by which England gained much, which France lost. M. Thiers himself, thoroughly imbued with the Protectionist fallacies, held the same opinions. He and they looked forward to undoing, by a course of Protectionist legislation, all the evil which they believed had been inflicted by the treaty.

French Free Traders, and English Free Traders who knew France, rejoiced that Free Trade was freed from the odium of the treaty, and that the French, who had experienced for ten years the advantages of comparative Free Trade, were in a position to compare it practically with Protection, unfettered by any treaty ties. The French Government at once set about doing so; its head-M. Thiers-was a confirmed Protectionist, and his Minister of Finance, M. Pouyer-Quertier, one of the largest cotton manufacturers in France, a zealous adherent of the same doctrines, looked forward to be amply recouped for his leader's duties on raw materials, by the exclusion of English manufactured cottons from the French markets. The agricultural interest was to be propitiated by duties on raw materials, cotton, silk, wools, hides, &c. The manufacturers to be reconciled to these duties by heavy import duties on all manufactured goods; the mercantile and shipping interest of the French seaports, whose trade would be injured by the check given to commerce by protective duties, to be mollified by heavy protective duties on foreign shipping (sur taxe de pavilion), and thus all classes were to be compensated except that uncomplaining race the general mass of consumers, who were to be

Id to attribute all the increased prices to the Prussians. Unfortunately, when it was attempted to put the scheme into execution, it was found it would not work. The great mass of French manufacturers, a great part of whose trade was export, protested that duties on raw material would ruin their export trade, which would not be aided by duties on manufactured goods entering France. Drawbacks on export were proposed, but found impracticable and useless. They also found the sur taxe de pavilion, which enhanced freights on raw material, a burden they could not bear, while the ports which were to have been conciliated by the protection to French shipping were even the loudest in their protests against it. The small quantity of French shipping, indeed, got increased freights, but the whole trades of the ports were injured, and, by a curious irony of fate, German shipping, which is under "the most favoured national clause," profited by the penalties imposed on the flags of other nations. The whole Protectionist system has, in fact, broken down, and at

this moment its abandonment is seen in France to be imminent. as it would never do for the French Government and its leader, M Thiers, to candidly avow that they were mistaken, and to recant their Protectionist theories (M. Thiers is far too clever ever to admit a mistake), he has fallen back on the device of a fresh treaty with Eng-He needs no treaty to regulate all duties and taxes as may best serve French interests, and, as I have already said, he fears no retaliation from us. But if he succeeds in embodying the departures from Protection which French' interests render necessary in a treaty with England, he will be enabled to protest that he is unchanged, but has only yielded to the desire of conciliating England, that he would have given France all the advantages of Protection but for political reasons, and will thus claim the advantages of theoretic Protection and practical though limited Free Trade. But how will the case stand in the interests of real Free Trade and sound economic views? During the ten years the late treaty lasted, French trade was most flourishing, yet the great bulk of the French nation believed that their interests were by the treaty sacrificed to those of England, and that its action was injurious to them. French trade cannot flourish for the next few years as it has done; duties, even moderate, on raw materials and heavy internal taxation must grievously hamper its development. But if we enter into a fresh treaty of commerce, all these evils, instead of being attributed to their true causes, will be attributed to it. French manufacturers and French writers cried out against the treaty when they were prosperous; how much more will they do so when their trade diminishes? Instead of laying to heart the practical lesson they are now receiving, they will be confirmed in all their fallacies, and the progress of Free Trade principles indefinitely deferred. all this for no real gain to us, for, as I have said, if left alone the real interests of French trade, which are identical with ours, will make themselves felt. The sur taxe de pavilion, from which our shipping interests now suffer, will undoubtedly be done away with at the call of French trade and on the demand of the French ports (Havre, the second largest French port, protests against it), and that will be a real victory of Free Trade principles undisguised by any mask of treaty.

This treaty was of such vital interest to the two nations that it was deemed desirable to make some suggestions to Lord Granville, then our Minister of Foreign Affairs. Indeed, I was so apprehensive of danger from this quarter, having read the Articles of a new Treaty proposed to his Lordship, that I thought it desirable to send the following telegram and letter to his Lordship, which, no doubt reached him while he was dining in the Mansion House at the Annual Cor-

poration Dinner:-

"The Right Hon. Lord Granville, Minister or Foreign Affairs.

"My LORD,—In these days of peace it is a hard thing to see our rulers sowing the seeds of future wars with their eyes open to the in-

evitable consequences, so I deemed it my duty to send you a telegram to the following effect, viz., 'I have read the articles of the New French Treaty of Commerce, and beg to be allowed to enter my protest, as being more injurious to Great Britain and France than could be inflicted in the event of a hostile army, half a million strong, landing at each place, viz., Dover and Paris,' hoping that by so doing I might be the humble instrument in the hands of God for preventing such a disaster from being completed and ratified.

"Loyalty to the Crown, the institutions, and the people prompts me to this action, and though I can scarcely expect any notice being taken of it by your Lordship, I nevertheless have the reflection that I have done my duty to my neighbour as far as lay in my power. 'He that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that

perish.'

"Will your Lordship allow me to draw your attention to the following manifest inconsistency, if not absolute absurdity, in the preamble, viz., 'Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain, and His Excellency the President of the French Republic, being equally animated with the desire to draw closer the ties of friendship which unite their two countries, and being desirous of placing on a permanent and satisfactory footing the commercial relations between the two States, have determined to conclude a treaty of commerce and navigation,' &c.

"In the above there is a contradiction in terms. How can 'the commercial relations of the two countries be placed on a permanent and satisfactory footing' under any commercial treaty which interferes with the freedom of exchange between the two countries or peoples? M. Thiers has entered on a financial policy or system by which he seems determined to complete the ruin of France; and I would advise your. Lordship to withdraw from such a position as will render your Lordship an accessory before or after the fact.

"Commercial treaties are incompatible with a Free Trade policy, and, as Free Trade is a first condition to the bond of international peace, let your Lordship set about the work of cleaning the hands of Great Britain, so that she shall 'touch not, taste not, handle not the unclean thing,' and all other countries will, in self-defence, and in the nature of things, follow the example in God's good time."—Nov. 16th.

1872.

This advice, given ten years ago, was ignored; and what is the result? At this moment we are on the brink of a rupture with France on the Egyptian question, which never could have arisen under perfect free trade. And why? Because the business of diplomacy would have died a natural death, and the power of peace and war would be relegated to the whole people, and not left to political tricksters and money-lending usurers.

How far the mind of Lord Granville was influenced by this letter

I have no means of knowing, but he, like all, or nearly all of our leading men, has done but little to inspire trust in his political integrity, and confidence in his or their moral capacity as enlightened statesmen. There is Mr. Lowe, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, who made a speech at Glasgow in the autumn of the same year, which shows quite clearly that if his mind is not all abroad on the subject, he possesses in a large degree the ability to sophisticate on a disagreeable public question, and fence with unpleasant and inconvenient truths and principles.

On the question of "strikes," Mr. Lowe says, and says quite truly, "When there is a demand for any particular article or commodity, is it not an absolute demand for that article at a particular price, and if it cannot be obtained at that price, a very slight rise will very often

materially check and destroy the demand for the article?"

Now let us examine how far this doctrine recoils upon his own head, and how he so egregiously violates this doctrine in his action as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Take, for instance, the tea duty.

When a ship from China or India arrives with a cargo of tea off the coast of Britain, there is a strike, backed by a blockading squadron and an army of taxeaters, in the shape of Custom House officers and revenue cutters, demanding and enforcing all sorts of lock-outs in order to prevent that tea being sold at the natural price of supply and demand. Besides the thousand and one impediments and obstructions, there is 50 to 100 per cent. exacted as a fiscal duty. Is not this rather more than a very slight rise which tends to "check and destroy?" The same may be said with regard to sugar. The author of the people's "Blue Book" proves conclusively that the sugar duty as at present constituted retains the principles of protection in the vilest form, the protected parties being the sugar-refiners and the West Indian Planters. These parties must necessarily be but a fraction of the population, and still for their special benefit (so called) the masses of the people are to be burdened with this fiscal strike and its pernicious effects, which practically sends a blight over the whole of the sugar-lands of our East Indian possessions and our tropical colonies. The same writer also shows that if the sugar and all other duties were repealed,\* "sugar now unknown in this country for richness, sweetness, purity, and fine flavour will then be sold for 2d. per lb." This cheapness must, in the nature of things, and according to Mr. Lowe's own showing, increase the consumption; suppose we say in five years it is doubled. "Even then our consumption would not nearly equal that of the Australian shepherd, whose ration allowance is 2 lb. of sugar per week; a greater consumption of sugar means a greater consumption of tea, coffee, cocoa, flour, dry and green fruit, and, in short, immeasurable increase of the comforts of all classes, but especially of the poor.'

<sup>\*</sup> Since this was written the sugar duty has been repealed.

Again, in page 225 of that book, the author says, "Beet sugar can be grown over the whole kingdom, and the chief obstacle to the introduction of this invaluable crop is the duty on sugar, on malt, and on spirits. It is dear spirits which causes drunkenness. If everybody could get drunk for a farthing or a halfpenny, in a few years no one would get drunk as a rule.\* In fact, this principle is exemplified in our own midst; take, for instance, the upper and middle classes; comparatively, their income, as compared with the working classes, enables them to get drunk for a farthing, relatively; and yet it is seldom they abuse the privilege to excess, and yet abstinence from drunkenness does not involve decrease of consumption in the aggregate; it only follows that the article is used moderately, and not abused as a rule. The poor, generally, if they could get a pint of good genuine beer for a penny, or a pound of good tea for a shilling, their homes would be more attractive than the gin palace in a very few years. Having beer regularly to their meals, takes away that craving which draws them to the gin-shop." So much for Mr. Lowe's theory that, "supposing a strike to increase the price of the article, it is quite evident that just in the proportion as it increases that price it must diminish the demand for that article." Like any other rule, it may have its exceptions. Such common-place truths as these are supposed to tickle the ears of the Glasgow audience, in order that he may the more readily (without their knowing it) put his hands into their pockets, and the pockets of the whole people, unnecessarily, to the tune of £244,880,000 annually, in order to raise a net revenue of about £,70,000,000.

Now the question is not so much with expenditure as with raising

of the revenue that we are concerned.

"Wealth ill-gotten is almost sure to be ill-spent." What can it be but hypocrisy that prompts him to make such a hullabaloo over £40,000, whilst he is trifling with the people's resources to the extent of hundreds of millions annually? Is not this a flagrant mockery? He has proved himself a "penny-wise and pound-foolish" statesman.

As regards the American claims upon our taxes, he is very pathetic. He says, "America came out of a gigantic civil war, bleeding at every pore. To her eternal honour be it said, she offered a unique instance in history. In her case no 'statutes glean the refuse of the sword.'" Perhaps not, but what about the starving half million of our sons of toil in the Cotton Famine, in the cotton manufacturing districts, whom the dogs of war hunted up and kidnapped by thousands to fight their battles, in violation of the spirit of our enlistment laws? What about the vindictive reconstruction policy after the war, whereby they made the whole white population into greater slaves, mentally, morally, and socially, than the blacks ever were physically? Through the oppressive tariffs by means of which they enslave also the whole

<sup>\*</sup> See Bates' "Amazons," on the use of a kind of rum in Brazil.

population of both North and South, in order to enrich a few placemen and manufacturers? These are the germs of another civil war sown broadcast through the length and breadth of the land. It was these odious tariffs that drove the South to secede from the North; they are, therefore, responsible for the war to begin with; the slavery question not being mooted until the war had been raging for twelve months.

The following extract from a letter to Mr. Gladstone will give you

a further illustration of this :-

"I entirely agree with you that to give the people the franchise is only the discharge of a debt that we owe to the whole people of the country; but I do not endorse the policy of paying only 6s. 8d. in the pound of that debt. Why should we be left out in the cold, whilst our younger brother in the colonies, who does not know his A B C on the question of free trade, should be allowed universal suffrage?

"I now leave the Reform question, and beg to trouble you with a

few observations on a subject in which I feel more at home.

"I heartily agree with you that we should 'learn lessons where we can'—to draw lessons from the experience of mankind, 'and from the facts that come under our view, whether they be despotic countries or

constitutional countries, Republican or Democratical.'

"I also agree with you in wishing well to our American brethren; but I do object, notwithstanding, that they are at this moment—or at least a vast majority of them—bending their necks to the yoke of a small minority, of monopolising Morrell tariff and Monroe docrine—men who will in the end throw the whole nation virtually over a precipice, and carry the whole of the civilised world with them.

"Who was it that gave America her strength, her wealth, her enduring prosperity? Not he who gave her democratic institutions,

but rather he who gave her liberal land laws.

"It was Great Britain who left her the legacy of slavery. South utilised it until the South became rich. The North became rich and populous by virtue of her liberal land-laws, drawing all or nearly all the surplus population of Europe to till her soil and clear her forests and jungle, the general government being pretty equally divided between them. The North, from motives best known to themselves, coveted the wealth of the South, proposed a system of protective tariffs, which had the effect of making the South pay through the nose for all their articles of clothing, iron, &c., for the sole benefit of a few manufacturers of the North. The South, in order to save their 'domestic institutions,' acquiesced in these laws until President Lincoln was elected by the manufacturing interest, which was considered by the South a notice to quit slavery without receiving free trade as an equivalent. We learn, then, from our transatlantic brethren that, although they had Democratic institutions, they in spite of this could introduce a system of hostile tariffs which caused one section to secede and the other to declare war against it for so doing. Hence we learn also that high protective tariffs produce civil war, and civil war not unfrequently leads to foreign war as a natural

sequence

"Well, we have also something to learn from our neighbours across the Channel, which we may call despotic, if you please. The French treaty—was not that a step in the direction of free trade? and though it was but a partial one, what has it done! Why, so far as it has been allowed to go, it has reconciled the two peoples, and cemented their affections so as to render war against each other an utter impossibility. If partial free trade will do this, what may we expect from entire freedom of trade?

"When the American war commenced, our Government had an opportunity, and that opportunity was taken advantage of in India by copying the American land-laws in dealing with the waste lands; but it was vetoed on arrival here by Sir C. Wood, who was then in power as Indian Secretary. This veto prevented this country from securing its position—from 'taking the tide at the flood which leadeth on to fortune.' This copying of the American land laws was Lord Stanley's,

under Lord Derby's Government.

"Well, what has been the consequences of the vetoing of this free trade in waste lands of India? It has thrown India back some generations in regard to progress. The capital that would have gone to her has found permanent investment elsewhere. Although she has had more than £200,000,000 over and above the normal price of her produce the last five years, yet this vast sum has not been permeated through the agricultural districts, but has been intercepted in great measure by the wealthy and extravagant urban population of the coast. The interior is left undeveloped: we hear every mail of famines of bread where lands have been taken for cotton to any extent; yet cotton does not come from thence in quantities sufficient to employ the people of either England or Ireland. From the latter place the exodus to America is fearful—so much so that the American Fenian leaders have contracted to sort them for the American employers, and send back the worthless ones with arms and money to foment discontent at home. These care not for being put into prison on arrival here.

In fact, the whole United Kingdom has been, through the want of a new cotton-field in India and our colonies, converted by our Yankee brethren into one vast machine for breeding, rearing, and educating the present generation of Britons for their own convenience and at

our expense.

"Now this is a state of things we could not find fault with, provided there were perfect free trade between them and us. This would bridge the great gulf which now separates us morally, socially, politically, and commercially. Let them repeal their Morrell tariffs, and the Monroe doctrine will die a natural death.

"Well, to sum up, what do we learn-or rather, what ought we to

learn-from all these things?

"First—We learn that, as the effects of the repeal of the corn-laws at home, our prosperity as a nation has been unexampled in the annals of the world—so much so that the people have been indifferent on reform or any other political change.

"Second—That the extension and progress of agricultural operations in our colonies, with a view to produce the necessary raw material to employ our people at home, is a mutual benefit to them all, and with-

out which our prosperity must necessarily be transitory.

"Third—That in order to do this successfully, it is necessary to copy the liberal land-laws of America for those colonies and Indian

possessions.

"Fourth—That this is the first duty of the Government, and the question or reform a secondary one, it being obvious that when the people are prosperous and happy, reform is to them a matter of indifference."

Mr. Lowe says: "Our object is not merely to gain a little victory or triumph over America, but to settle matters in such a way that we not only should get rid of the present question, but lay a permanent basis of good will and mutual kindness between two nations speaking the same language and mixed up with each other in innumerable transactions, which no Government, however powerful, can ever wrench asunder." This is a noble and praisworthy object, but what a mockery when these diplomatists, instead of representing the feelings and interpresent of the mass of the people on both sides of the Atlantic, misrepresent them.

Did it never occur to these so-called wise statesmen, that in order to effect this object, it was necessary to establish, as a first condition, a system of entire free trade between them, so that those "innumerable transactions" should become an unlimited quantity? Had there never been fiscal duties, there would have been no war with America.

A body of men, such as those employed as diplomatists at Geneva, although well-meaning and clever jurists, can never settle international questions, except they were invested with the power of repealing those international laws which tend to obstruct the indefinite multiplication of transactions in connection with peaceful commercial intercourse.

The only international Bond of Peace is international "free trade"—i.e., abolition of all customs and excise duties, either for protection or revenue purposes. Under this free trade policy millions of men seeking their own selfish interests in "all men's goods," not because the latter is what they see at the moment, but because, being based on the everlasting basis of natural and universal laws of supply and demand, individuals would, being free agents, multiply by millions the transactions between the two peoples, and in doing so, each one as he landed on the shores of the other would be able to dispose of his wares at natural values in exchange for the surplus produce of the other without let or hindrance by legal statute. Thus, each ministering to the natural wants of each, each would become (although

unconsciously for the moment) an ambassador of international peace for the whole; excellence would then find its due recognition, merit and demerit their due reward, and the law of supply and demand would have fair play.

## FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT.

Which Mr. Lowe says "ought to be exceedingly interesting to great communities like Glasgow," and after dilating upon the mal-administration during the Crimean war which so disgusted the public that the cry was almost universal for taking everything out of Government hands, and placing it into that of private firms by contract, he goes on to say that "That feeling has so entirely died away that, on the contrary, there is a feeling ahroad that almost everything ought to be placed in the hands of Government, and that that which is left to private enterprise should be taken away as much as possible, and that everything we can do should pass into a Government department, and be administered by Government officials."

Now, in our experience, we find the latter part of this assertion to be the very reverse of truth, and venture an opinion that if the whole country were balloted on the subject, that (barring the 658 M.P.'s) the

result would be almost unanimous against it.

But perhaps Mr. Lowe bases his assertion on the remarks in a recent speech of a Scotch M.P. (Mr. M'Combie, M.P. for West Aberdeenshire), who is reported to have said in his speech to his constituents, "I have to offer you an apology for not having got more places for you from the Government. I have done pretty well for you, but had not got all I had asked for, but it was not surprising when there were over 350 Liberal members in the House of Commons, all striving to obtain situations for their friends, and 100 members may be applying for one place." This needs no comment.

Is it possible that the above was the subject uppermost in the Right Hon. R. Lowe's mind when he also said "his lips were sealed?" Ask a conjuror, thimble-rigger, or a card-sharper to disclose the secret by which he imposes on his audience, and "his lips are sealed" too.

We print, in another column, an essay on "Taxation as it is, and Taxation as it ought to be," which our readers will do well to read and study closely. This will to some extent, open their eyes as to the reason why statesmen's "lips are sealed" when the question of righteous judgment arises, especially in the way the taxes are obtained. We argue that when the raising of the revenue of the country is put on a just and righteous basis, the spending of it will right itself by a self-acting process.

### A PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY.

Mr. Lowe's idea is, "That when you entrust Government with technical duties, you must entrust the department to a person unacquainted with its technical duties."

It by no means follows that we *must* do anything so absurdly foolish; it is very true we *may* do it, and have done it, and not more so in any case than when we put Mr. Lowe to be Chancellor of the Exchequer; but, we repeat, it by no means follows that we *must* do it.

When Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister, in 1868, he began wrong, and therefore his career was a short one; if he had placed Mr. Bright under him as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and had encouraged him to go to and reform the taxing institutions of the country according to the programme of the late lamented Richard Cobden, whose right-hand fellow-worker was Mr. Bright himself, and in conformity with the promises Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright had been making of a free breakfast-table to the whole people during their late election speeches, both their memories would have rested upon a lofty pedestal for all time.

But instead of that, what does he do? He places Mr. Lowe as Chancellor of the Exchequer, with power to shunt out of sight the free trade question, and even allows him to pursue an opposite and retrograde policy to that which had gained for himself the affections of the vast majority of the people.

For instance, he allowed him to pursue the policy, viz., of putting a

tax upon matches.

This was the most fatal blunder Mr. Gladstone ever made, and in order to save himself from the righteous indignation of the people, he cleverly turned round and foisted upon them the Irish Church question as the upas-tree of society, whereas the tax upon the food of the people is by far the greater upas-tree of the two.

Our notions of the functions of Government are that it should

execute judgment and righteousness.

First—To see justice done between man and man.

Second—To repeal all laws that violate natural laws and laws divine.

Third—To undertake the safe conduct of the postal service.

Fourth-To see to the economical and efficient defence of the

country; and

Fifth—To take the management of the great modern king's highway out of the hands of the present costly "jobbing" and monooolising boards of directors, whose "dog-in-manger" policy prevents the utilisation of this beautiful modern invention (the railways) for the benefit of the whole people; and work them as efficiently and as accommically as it has done the postal and telegraph systems.

We agree that no manufacturing ought to be carried on by Government; that their repairing establishments be kept strictly to repairs only.

We now pass on to that part of his speech headed "Ireland has a grievance." Mr. Lowe says that "he has reserved this for what he calls "his last, because he thinks it a little more amusing than those which preceded it. (Laughter.) Ireland has a grievance which I have been assured fully justifies any amount of agitation for Home

Rule, and that grievance is this, the fisheries of Ireland have very much declined." Mr. Lowe also says, "I cannot say exactly why, but I am afraid the fact is undoubted. I asked a witness in a committee of the House of Commons what was the reason, and he said they had given up the fisheries, because they were so much discouraged by the bad harvest." (Great laughter and applause.)

Poor Ireland! Her people are ignorant of the true source of their

poverty and failing harvests.

If they had not been ignorant they would have had the common sense to come in force, spade in hand, as the poor match-making boys and girls did to demand justice at the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. English labourers in the rural districts have the same reason to complain, and the sooner they join hands, and bring half a million spades to Westminster, the better. They need not necessarily break the peace; all they have to do is to demand a "free breakfasttable"\* at the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. This little display would illustrate the truth of the saying of our immortal bard, that "Conscience makes cowards of us all," as it did in the case of the match-tax.

The malt duty alone is responsible for throwing out of cultivation no less than ten millions of acres in Ireland alone. But this is not all; the agriculturist is prevented directly by legal statute from cultivating tobacco. Thus the British and Irish farmer is not allowed to carry on his business in the best way he can to make a living; how, then, is it possible for him to pay his labourers liberally?

"The story of a certain Turk" is simply another move of the "pea and the timbles" by which he deceives his Glasgow audience. All this would be very amusing, though very ridiculous, were it not that

the question is a very serious onc.

# REMISSIONS OF TAXATION.

Under this head, after a flourish of trumpets in defence of the Government, Mr. Lowe tells an anecdote of "the celebrated George Selwin going to see Lord Lovat beheaded." This, I suppose, was a kind of sauce which makes the canny Scotch relish the brazie that is to follow, viz., that he had in four years taken off nine millions of taxes, and yet the revenue is now £1,200,000 more than it was in 1868, when the nine millions of taxes were in existence—wonderful eco my! and he also says that they have taken off fifteen millions from the National Debt, and would have paid off twenty-four millions had they not been obliged to borrow about eight and three-quarter millions to buy the

<sup>\*</sup> The term "Free breakfast-table" is often, consciously or unconsciously, misconstrued, as though it meant that they were to have a breakfast given them as a charitable institution, whereas it is only meant that the consumption of articles for breakfast shall be free from a tax.

telegraph system, "and not a bad investment." What a wonderful achievement, to buy an article for about eight and three-quarter millions that only cost the vendors a fraction over two millions—

jobbery, spoilation!

Again, he takes credit to himself, or to the Government, for the decrease of pauperism and crime, forgetting that the inflated state of trade for the time being had found "something for idle hands to do," instead of the Evil One. The demand for iron rails all over the world, and other things have sprung up, in spite of the fiscal systems which obstruct and impede the progress of those "innumerable transactions" from "multiplying to an unlimited quantity," in order to create a feeling of peace in the minds of the people, and a power which no Government could withstand." Considering that this large saving was effected at the fearful cost of £244,880,000 being taken out of the people's pockets, or kept from flowing in (which is the same thing), because Mr. Lowe must have a food tax in place of a tax on realised property, or, in other words, because he refuses to give the people a free breakfast-table.

We venture an opinion that Mr. Lowe's speech was more conspicuous for what it did not say than for what it did say. Would it not have been more interesting to a "great community like Glasgow" if he had informed them how the new French treaty of commerce was

progressing?

Verily, if the people seek bread at the door of this man, they are sure to receive nothing better than a stone. It is a fearful thing to think that these so-called rulers should be making commercial treaties which bind them for an indefinite period to deprive their subjects of a "free breakfast-table," and all the time mock the people with such phrases as "Our lips are sealed."

In this day's *Echo* (Oct. 8th), their Paris correspondent says:—
"The semi-official party make a great feature of the new commercial treaty with England, and to-night they inform us that it will most

probably be signed before the Chamber meets."

Now, we hold that commercial treaties are a mistake, commercial treaties imply restrictions or fiscal duties on commodities, and these are proved in practice to be not only a mistake, but absolutely wicked and wasteful—a wasting of the people's bread, a curse to all classes, and especially the poor.

Where are our chambers of commerce? what are they about to allow these things to go on, weighting and handicapping them in the race of competition, when the American Government have cast off this weight from the shoulders of their labour and capital by repealing their

tea and coffee duties entirely?

We therefore enter our most solemn protest against any new commercial treaty with France being entered into without first appealing to the people, whom we advise to insist upon opening our ports not only to French commerce, but also to the commerce of the whole world.

### CHAPTER III.

"What is the political work which we are endeavouring to promote? It is no other than the instinctive effort of every people towards liberty. And what is liberty, whose name can make every heart beat, and which can agitate the world, but the union of all liberties, the liberty of conscience, of instruction, of association, of the press, of locomotion, of labour, and of exchange—in other words, the free exercise, for all, of all the inoffensive faculties; and, again, in other words, the destruction of all despotisms, even of legal despotism, and the reduction of law to its only rational sphere, which is to regulate the individual right of legitimate defence, or to repress injustice."—M. F. Bastiat.

A NOTHER phase of this great question developed itself where one might have expected better knowledge than was then and there exhibited—viz., in the Manchester Chamber of Commerce at the Meeting, February of the present year, 1877. All things considered, I deem that meeting noteworthy.

The subject of discussion related to trade and commerce of England, as elements of the Eastern question respecting Turkey and

Russia.

The chairman seems to have landed himself on the horns of a dilemma in deciding between the two principles in the Eastern problem. Turkey, he says, is a Free-Trade country, and therefore we must give our sympathy to her rather than Russia, who bars our trade

out by hostile tariffs.

Mr. Jacob Bright says no, we must rather sympathise with Russia, inasmuch as, in spite of prohibitory tariffs, that country did a larger trade with us than Turkey. The trade of the latter being £13,000,000 imports and exports; whilst the Russians, according to the returns in the Statesinan's year-book (cited by Mr. H. Mason), imported from us in 1872, £7,000,000 worth; and exported to us £24,000,000; 1873, £9,000,000, and exported to us £21,000,000; 1874, £9,000,000, and exported to us £21,000,000. So that our trade out and in with Russia amounts to £29,000,000, whilst it only comes to £13,000,000 with Turkey.

Again, our trade with the United States has gradually fallen off from £41,000,000 in 1872 to £22,000,000 in 1875. Now there is a gloomy foreboding in all these statistics, but what good are we to expect from repeating year after year the downward movement of our figures, when at the same time our chamber sets it face against

listening to the only practical way of removing the obstacles which lay in the way of upward progress? They treat the question as one of f, s. d. only, and ignore it altogether as one of justice, morality, and common-sense. If they had any notion of the principles of political economy they would do the one and not leave the other undone.

Mr. Hoyle was about to point out one of the evils which lay at the root of the heavy handicapping of the British manufacturer, but he was sharply called to order by the chairman, who ordered him to keep to the question. But it is well known that Mr Hoyle himself is unsound in the mode of providing a remedy for the evil of which he so justly complains. The cure for the evil lies in abolishing the high tariffs on the people's food, such as are so bitterly felt and complained of in the case of raiment in Russia and America, and to some extent in France,

and all other so-called civilised nations.

Some people comfort themselves in the fact that America and other manufacturing countries are suffering from bad trade as well as ourselves, and expect things to come right without granting the only conditions, viz., absolute Free Trade. Mr. Hoyle would remedy the evil by trying to persuade people to give over drinking. He might just as well expect them to give over eating. If he wishes the people to spend less in drink and more in clothing, he has only to get the repeal of the malt and spirit tax, by which means he would leave in the pockets of the people, after consuming the same quantity as last year, the enormous sum of £80,000,000. This would enable them to pay the tax direct, viz., £30,000,000, and still retain a balance of £50,000,000, wherewith to buy all the articles of home manufacture that would be equivalent to making the consumption of these articles threefold what it is, and thereby setting all our busy hives of industry going full swing. This saving equals in amount both the Turkish and Russian trade with us, both export and import. When Mr. Hoyle and the Chamber of Commerce can answer the question involved in the above figures, they may probably see their way to solving the problem.

As regards our foreign trade, I would entreat Mr. Mason and others to read the tracts of the "Society for the Suppression of Opium Trade," on whose general council 1 see his name. He will there find sufficient ground for repealing the tea duty, as well as suppressing the opium trade. By giving up those two pernicious sources of revenue, we should gain the affections of 400,000,000 people, and smooth the. way for trading with them to such an extent as to consume the produce of double the number of mills and mines that are now in Great Britain

and elsewhere.

Well, the tea duty is about £3,500,000, and the opium revenue is about £6,500,000, say in round numbers together £10,000,000. This is as a drop in a bucket compared with the blessing of peace and the elevation of the Government and the people, morally, socially, politically, economically, and materially. How is it likely that foreign nations can see their way to reciprocate Free Trade measures when they see we are doing it only partially.

# THE EASTERN QUESTION.

The Times recently devoted two leaders in one day to this subject: one of them treats of the general question, the other more particularly of the situation in Egypt. King-craft, Priest-craft, Money-craft, Military-craft, &c., seem to be the only materials on which it can base an argument for the social regeneration and reconstruction of society after the storm, and when the calm shall have intervened. We have long hoped, but hoped in vain, for the reconstruction of the public mind, so that in times of profound peace, or apparent peace, statesmen (if such are in existence) could seize any passing opportunities, and might discard altogether the physical sword, and unsheath the moral one. We mean by the latter "perfect freedom." We could give our own definition of the term as applied to trade, or expand it to a wider significance, and show "the service of God is perfect freedom;" but we prefer at present to confine ourselves to the former and lesser meaning. If our powerful contemporary could be persuaded to adopt this text, and give it a just and righteous interpretation in all his leaders on the general well-being of society, there would be some hope for the world at large.

The Times, speaking of the armistice, says:—"Now may be done what might have been done a year ago, or six months ago; the lost opportunity returns—a thing rare in human affairs." We imagine that no one knows by experience the truth of this maxim befter than he, and yet he is continually (in his predictions on future events) deviating from the relations between cause and effect. Again, he says:—"Governments have been taught by events, have been roused by criticism, and it is in their power that all shall end well. We think," says the Times, "with the majority of our countrymen, that the chances are in favour of peace . . . . by taking away every pretext for agitation or intrigue, make a new aggression more clearly an offence against the public law of Europe." What is this public law of Europe? Is it based upon justice and freedom? If not, it is a mere shadow and delusion.

Our contemporary then goes on to express some doubts as to whether he and the majority of his countrymen are right in concluding that peace is secured. He says:—"But it is right to bear in mind that this happy issue has not yet been secured; it has only a strong probability in its favour. It should be remembered also that peace will not descend to us as if from the heavens, with olive branch and doves, to give its blessing to an apathetic or careless world. Peace has still to be won by judgment, by a skilful use of opportunities, by the courage which does not shrink from originality, and by the firmness which maintains a principle amid variations of detail."

This last sentence is brave writing, but somewhat vague; let us

try if we can give our interpretation of it.

(1) "Peace has still to be won by judgment." But it must be judgment in a wider sense than is here intended. A judgment that does not oppress mankind by unjust and unequal taxation, nor restrict the field of employment for the industrious by taxes on commodities. (2) "Then as to the skilful use of opportunities." When was the opportunity presented that is now "returned" to us, but of which we failed to avail ourselves when it first opportunely appeared in 1854, twenty-two years ago? Has the Times come round to the literal endorsement of the advice to statesmen which was uttered by the late lamented R. Cobden and J. Bright (of that day), as described in the following lines, quoted from a speech of Cobden's:—"The man, or the body of men, who shall succeed in the abolition of Customs and Excise duties in this or any other country, would be the greatest benefactor to that country and the world at large." (3) If these words were printed on the righthand corner of every page of the Times until this much-to-be-desired consummation should come to pass, the powerful influence of our great contemporary would indeed be devoted to a purpose truly noble; and (4) It would then display that "firmness which maintains a principle amid variations of detail." We repeat, the opportunity for reconstruction presented itself at the time after the peace of 1856. The Great Powers had then an opportunity of saying to the Turks and the Russians, from henceforth we will sheath the sword in Europe and make all our ports free; we will establish just and equal laws, and will make Free Trade a reality and not a mere name; we will maintain inviolate the peace of Europe by building up great international and inter-blended interests.

If such had been the "reconstruction" after the Crimean War, we should never have heard of the present war, we should never have heard of the Denmark-Austro-Prussian War, we should never have heard of the Franco-Prussian War. Instead of these devastating conflicts, man to man would have brothers been the whole world over. How different to this picture of peace and happiness is the present state, as described by our contemporary, viz. :- "Russia is supposed to be tempting Austria to her ruin with a portion of the spoils of Turkey; the alarmed Hungarians resist, the German subjects are doubtful, and inclined to join with them. The Austrians suspected of joining Russia and accepting the solid profit, in place of the doubtful gain of propping up a few years longer the edifice utterly ruinous and condemned. This is the result of trusting to diplomacy and the policy of the sword for international safety. What good has come of it? Though it has been tried for thousands of years, it has proved nothing but a sorry and vain expedient. The state of Europe at the present moment is, indeed, a cruel satire on the promises of human happiness which were to flow from the mutual expansion of international trade, with all the harmonising and elevating influences that ought to belong to it.

When England has entirely cleaned her hands of this useless policy, she need not fear the result, it will be in accord with that divine precept which Cobden was wont so oft to repeat, viz :- "Be just, and fear not the results." To take the case in illustration: in such a state as this Russian ambition would be chastened in view of Russian interests, for she would then find that Great Britain, her best customer for corn, leather, hemp, etc. etc., would never fail her as such, because then, her ports being free as ours, there would be power to buy from Russians unlimited quantities, because Russia would have removed the barrier that prevents Briton's selling to Russians. The world would surely be found wide enough for us all, both nationally and internationally. Englishmen may then, and not till then, "cherish a reasonable hope that the ostensible and professed objects of each European Power will be the real ones. Then and not till then will united Europe be able to say that every just cause of discontent has been removed; the Eastern Question will then assuredly be set at rest." We may well cultivate such thoughts as these on the eve of events pregnant with the most momentous issues. To-day, from the standpoint of commerce, we teach our diplomatists where is their strongest ally. We solemnly enter our protest alike against the horrors of the war that is threatened, and the iniquitous neglect of the proper measures of prevention that have led up to the present crisis.

This is another of those national falsehoods on which we have of late years been trading and in one sense living in a fool's paradise, while all intelligent "foreigners" clearly see that we as a nation have been crying out against restrictionists before we are ourselves out of that dark and dangerous wood. To illustrate our false position, and this evil and national anomaly, we need only refer to the present character and conduct of the "Cobden Club" in relation to Free-Trade principles. The following graphic account of the annual meeting of this club, in 1876, will clearly show its character at the

present time:-

## THE COBDEN CLUB AND FREE TRADE.

The annual general meeting of the Cobden Club was held on Saturday in the Centenary Club, Pall Mall, London. Mr. T. B. Potter, M.P., occupied the chair, and amongst the gentlemen present were the Right Hon. Milner Gibson, Sir Louis Mallet, the Hon. G. C. Brodrick, Mr. James Heywood, Mr. J. W. Probyn, and Mr. Briggs.

\*Mr. Briggs proposes the following resolution:-

"That in the opinion of this meeting the slow progress that the Cobden Club is making, and has made, is to be attributed to the fact that the

<sup>\*</sup>This portion of the proceedings was suppressed from the official report of the meeting, by whom it is not for us to say.

Committee of the Club, in propagating the creed of Free Trade, has omitted to make it clearly understood that the members of the Club hold, as a fundamental principle, that Customs and Excise duties are incompatable with the doctrine of Free Trade, whether such duties be levied for revenue purposes alone or for revenue and protection combined." It is, therefore, resolved, "That the Committee be requested to invite essays to be written by real Free-Traders, based upon the following text, uttered by Mr. Cobden shortly before his death, 'The man, or body of men, who shall succeed, in this or any other country, in abolishing Customs and Excise duties, will be its greatest benefactor."

The chairman said that as Mr. Briggs' resolution was in the nature of a vote of censure upon the committee, it had better be put after the

adoption of the report.

Mr. Briggs did not wish it to be taken in that light; all that he wished for was that the Cobden Club should be a power in the world of political economy, and that it should rest upon the broad basis of Cobden's doctrine of Free Trade. He therefore gave way to the chairman's suggestion, and allowed the vote to be taken for the report without further comment.

After the adoption of the report,

Mr. Briggs, in support of his resolution, spoke to the following effect:—I make this appeal to the Cobden Club with a view to test its Free-Trade proclivities. If there be a real Free-Trader present, I shall obtain a seconder to my motion; if not, I must be content to remain alone the advocate and true disciple of Cobden's views on this point. What a mockery it is for this club to pretend to be composed of true disciples of Cobden, whilst it is doing its utmost to suppress all efforts, and even giving the cold shoulder to those who endeavour to disseminate Cobden's principles as regards the abolition of Customs and Excise laws!

The chairman wished to call Mr. Briggs' attention to an essay by Mr. Cliffe Leslie, which the club had recently published, and also to the distribution of some of the Liverpool Financial Reform Almanacks.

Mr.Briggs: I cannot see what good the issuing of these almanacks can do, whilst the attention of the people is not drawn to the enormous evils arising out of the rotten system of raising the revenue through the mouths of the people. As regards Mr. Leslie's essay, he (Mr. Briggs) had certainly read it, but did not remember any striking denunciation of Customs and Excise in it; he would read it again. But however this might be, it was clear that, if the efforts above referred to of the club to propagate Cobden's doctrine were all that could be claimed for the club, the club itself was a delusion; it was a mockery, inasmuch as it was making a show of doing that which it was determined to hinder from being done.

More than one of the seven members present said that if this reso-

lution were passed it would break up the club at once.

Mr. Briggs replied that if that resolution broke up the club, the sooner it was broken up the better for the commonwealth.

Another member said: "But it is doing some good."

Mr. Briggs: Yes, but that minimum of good is like the small bit of truth that you find in the greatest of lies; it operates so as to prevent the maximum of good ever being achieved. What chance has the Cobden Club of converting the outer world when it is itself unsound on one of the fundamental principles which Cobden laboured so hard to establish? When we speak to our foreign brethren about free trade, they tell us to take the beam out of our own eye before attempting to take the mote out of theirs. It is true you don't levy taxes on many articles, but those you do tax are articles of general consumption amongst the masses of the people, and that is the way to levy your revenue so as to oppress the people for the benefit of a handful of men, who are by that means made into millionaires at the cost of the common labourer. One of the leading speakers at the last Cobden Club dinner (on the 17th of July, 1875), speaking of the motto of the club, "Free Trade, Peace and Goodwill to Man," went on to say, "We have this peace and quiet. Is there no advantage we can take of it? There is one opportunity we could seize if we would, of doing good both to ourselves and the world at large. I mean the opportunity we English-speaking people have of establishing free trade among ourselves." This very same gentleman, when called upon at Edinburgh some weeks after to address the students in the colleges of that city on the question of colonial governments, spoke as follows with regard to revenue tariffs: "There seems to me nothing in the position of those communities (our colonies) to prevent them finding it to their advantage, as we do, to raise by duties on a few articles of general consumption so much of their revenue as is obtained by indirect taxes." Now, will not the foreigner laugh in his sleeve at this blowing hot and cold on the question of free trade? Will not our own countrymen say this is the language of a man who "wears two faces under one hat?" I have read somewhere that there were not long ago 194 M.P.'s who were also members of the Cobden Club. If this be so, what a power for good, what a bloodless revolution could be brought about for the good of the common weal, if these 194 M.P.'s had the moral courage of a Cobden, and were determined to do their work in his way! they would then deserve the name of Cobden's disciples; they would then, and not till then, be entitled to the motto, "Free Trade, Peace and Goodwil among Men." But their present attitude in the House of Commons not only paralyses all attempts to promote free trade, but is in its essence an insult to the memory of that great statesman.

As no one seconded the resolution, it could not be put to the

meeting.

The annual meeting the previous year, 1875, was equally unsatisfactory, for no new life was manifested amongst the politically dry

It was said by some persons, and not without good show of reason, that the Club was "Soul without a body." What can it be? It cannot be the spirit of Cobden, for if it were it would have long since entered into the heads and hearts of millions of our fellow-citizens, showing them that the time had arrived for doing the other half of the work of free trade which he was not permitted to finish during his lifetime, viz., the abolition of Customs and Excise; he would have seen clearly that to trifle any longer with this question was cruel and suicidal, and his action would not have taken the shape of giving a few thousands of books, written by milk-and-water free-traders, and winding up with a sumptuous dinner at the "Ship," as is now done by the Cobden Club. No; judging from what he did in the days of the Anti-Corn Law League, he would have taught the people from John O'Groat's House to Land's End by, first, having an organ in the shape of a league paper daily; second, monster meetings in the Free Trade and the Agricultural Halls, where his unadorned eloquence would have reached not only the hearts, heads, and sympathies of his hearers, but also their pockets for the sinews of war, wherewith to fight the battles; and, thirdly, with the proceeds thereof he would have despatched from London alone (as he did then) fifty tons a week of free-trade literature east, west, north, and south. By this means he would have brought the question before the Legislature in both Houses, and, as a matter of course, the question would have been ventilated in the daily leading journals not once a year, but every day until it was finally settled.

Now, let us give our readers a few extracts from the speech of the learned professor who occupied the chair at the grand banquet (M.

Chevalier)

In proposing the prosperity of the Cobden Club, he said:—"The Cobden Club of itself, and through its numerous associates scattered all over the world, has rendered important services to the cause of civilisation. Its motto, 'Free trade, peace, goodwill among nations,' is ever to be praised. It is perfectly well chosen. The first point, free trade, seems now in a fair way to form part of the policy of all Governments, and at no distant day to come off conqueror. But it is not so with the other sentiments expressed in your device. There is still alive, and in good spirits, a school of politicians who seem to consider peace and goodwill among nations as wild dreams and chimerical notions fit only for the amusement or literary exercise of rhetoricians."

All this goes to prove that, as free-traders, we can never succeed unless we take our standpoint from a sound and definite principle; we cannot call ourselves free-traders in the true sense of the word so

long as we tolerate a system of Customs and Excise.

Again he says:—"On this important subject of free trade we have now come to the testing point. Before the end of 1877 all the Governments of Continental Europe must make up their minds in regard to the renewal of their commercial treaties, and this is but the question of free trade itself."

Here, we regret to say, we must join issue with the learned professor. We hold that commercial treaties are incompatible with international freedom of trade; commercial treaties imply that there is some restriction or restrictive tariffs to treat about. Free trade means that all the ports are open and free to all the world for fair and honest trade in all commodities whatsoever. This is our doctrine as free-traders, and this is why we denounce Customs and Excise as being more injurious to all classes of the nations of civilisation than would a blockading squadron assembled in hostile array for the purpose of starving us into submission. So long as we tolerate these pernicious Customs and Excise duties, whether under commercial treaties or otherwise, we shall not be, at the end of 1877 or 1977, a wit nearer to the point of free trade pur et simple.

It is true that Cobden did once tolerate a commercial treaty, and even assisted to negotiate one, but he did it simply as a preliminary step, hoping to give the French people an opportunity of testing the benefits that would be sure to show themselves, so as to open the eyes of the people to the blessings free trade would be sure to bring

with it when it was ultimately adopted in its entirety.

We still concur that "still persevering exertions are needed to secure this result." Nothing can prove this necessity more than the following extract. He goes on to say that experience and well-ascertained facts constitute the strongest evidence, and are the best arguments to use in persuading statesmen, representative assemblies, and the public at large in every country of the propriety and necessity of a change from prohibition and protection to free trade." God this sentence had ended here, but he is reported to have added, "from heavy Customs duties to a very liberal tariff." We shall be delighted to find that the last words of this sentence have been added by the shorthand writer or the Times reporter by mistake. events, we shall hope to see them omitted in the official report of the Cobden Club, for if they are allowed in that, there is an end to all hopes of success for the Cobden Club ever becoming a true representative of the true principles of free trade as advocated by Cobden. They will for ever remain as a blot upon the escutcheon of the memory of that great and good man, and serve to denounce the modern doctors of political economy. The wealth of England, and not only England, but all the nations she deals with, would have been tenfold what it is had she gone in for free trade in everything when she repealed her Corn Laws. To illustrate this we have only to refer to the development of trade all over the world as the result of a partial trial of free trade.

After dilating on the benefits that France has received by adopting the principles to a certain extent, small though it is, he says—"If, then, the tree of free trade has produced such fruits, even when

as is the case of France" (and he might have said in England also), "some of its largest roots are wanting, and some of its finest branches cut off, what will it not produce when all its roots and branches are allowed to develop themselves freely and fully?" ("Hear, hear," and cheers.) This is the voice of a free-trader, and so is the following, in which we concur :- "Free trade is the intimate friend and ally of peace. If we had it in the treaties which were negotiated from year to year after the signature to the treaty of 1866 twenty years sooner, it is very likely the awful war which broke out between France and Germany in 1870 would have been averted. This opinion is held on the Continent by a number of enlightened persons." Mr. W. E. Forster, speaking of peace, said, "We have this peace and quiet. Is there no advantage we can take of it? There is one opportunity we could seize if we would of doing good both to ourselves and the world at large. mean the opportunity we English-speaking people have of establishing free trade among ourselves." "There's the rub:" let England take the lead, and emancipate herself from the curse, the suicidal curse of levying "black mail," upon her working bees, and the whole civilised world will follow in the nature of things.

There being no hope of any real free trade movement emanating from this so-called Cobden Club, an effort was made to form another society—in fact, a real Free-Trade League—and the following rules were drawn up, a committee formed, and officers appointed pro ten.,

the particulars of which are here submitted:-

Hoping against hope, attempts were made, even at the eleventh

hour, to enlist the co-operation of the Cobden Club, but in vain.

At a largely-attended conference, held October 17th, 1874, in the rooms of the Social Science Association, No. 1, Adam Street, Adelphi, London, for the purpose of considering the best means of obtaining the removal of all taxes on food; after a full discussion, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

That this conference, having duly considered the present mode of taxation, is of opinion that the method pursued in taxing food is pernicious in its incidence, unjust in operation, repugnant to the best interests of society, and injurious to trade, commerce, and agriculture. This conference is further of opinion that in any re-adjustment of the system for raising the imperial revenue, the claims of the people for a "free breakfast-table," and the removal of all taxes on their food, should have the first consideration.

A committee was appointed, which held its first meeting at the above rooms on Wednesday evening, October 22nd, when it was resolved to establish a Free-Trade League, with the following objects:—

 To obtain the repeal of all taxes on food, unfetter trade from fiscal incumbrances, and revise taxation in such manner as shall make

it just and equitable.

In carrying out these objects it should be distinctly understood that the League has no political aim, further than to obtain the repeal of those Acts of Parliament operating in restraint of industry.

It was further resolved-

That the Association be called the Free-Trade League.

That its government shall consist of a General and an Executive Council, with President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, and Secretary.

That the Executive shall consist of twenty-five members, exclusive

of the officers, who shall be ex officio.

That the officers of the Association be elected annually, at the yearly

meeting of the General Council and members.

That all members have the right to nominate and vote for officers. That adhesion to the programme and a subscription of not less than one shilling per annum constitute membership.

#### Address of the Committee.

The land of every country is the basis of its wealth and strength, and its market price ought to form the groundwork for taxation. a narrow and very erroneous view, too commonly taken by landed proprietors, that by throwing taxation upon industry they are thereby

relieving land from its portion of the burden.

What would be the increased price of land twenty years hence, only at its present rate of increase? If the pressure upon the means of subsistence were now removed by repealing all taxes pressing on labour, on stock-in-trade; machinery, and all works of industry by the adoption of a system of internal and international free trade? What a world of misconception and malignant passion would be saved if taxes were really, as well as virtually, laid upon realised property!

A practical reconciliation would be effected between the wealthier and the poorer classes if taxes were universally removed from the

necessaries and luxuries of life.

The late Rev. Dr. Chalmers said:—"What a death-blow would be thus inflicted on the vocation of demagogues! What a sweetening influence it would have on British society, after the false medium was dissipated through which the high and the low now look on each other as natural enemies! If the whole of our public revenue were raised by means of a territorial impost, it would ultimately add nothing to the burden which now lies on the proprietors of the land, for they, when fighting against such a commutation, are fighting in defence of an imaginary interest." They proved this when they resisted the abolition of the Corn Laws.

Had that political economy preceded instead of succeeding the agitation, it would have superseded all the tempestuous politics of the time. Who were the demagogues of that period? "That noble band of men who, under the leadership of Richard Cobden and John Bright. did more for the honour, glory, and greatness of Britain than did all

the great warriors from Agincourt to Waterloo," notwithstanding that what they succeeded in accomplishing was but a moiety of the work intended. The Free-Trade League, with the help of Providence and its fellow-countrymen, proposes now to complete the work so nobly begun in 1846. With faith in the cause it has espoused, it has determined to brave, as did its compeers of other days, the obloquy and epithets of being firebrands, demagogues, and revolutionists.

We therefore appeal to trades' union leaders, whether of employers or employed, as they value the interests of those whose advocates they are, as they value their reputation for consistency, honesty, and common-sense, to consider whether if in helping to repeal the taxes on commodities that they are not practically assisting to increase, at least

by one-fourth, the purchasing power of both profits and wages.

"England expects that every man will do his duty;" and her future depends mostly on the conduct of her working-men. With harmony between employer and employed, no country can compete with her in the markets of the world in her natural products, when her fiscal system has been righted.

To this let no one earn the reproach which one of England's greatest

poets complains of when he exclaims-

"Oh, Indifference! thou dreaded pow'r. Who can withstand thy baneful influence?"

A metropolitan journal the following week commented upon this

free trade effort in the following able manner:—

"We have never quite approved of the phrase, 'Free breakfasttable; but the objects of this association come up so nearly to our own views of Free Trade that we are with them heart and soul. Cobden Club, which is composed of a large number of eminent men, nearly all of whom are more or less distinguished in politics or literature, has never had the courage to toe the mark or take the bull by the horns. Any theory on this subject that stops short of the immediate abolition of all custom-houses, the world over, and the absolute abrogation of all export and import duties, is utterly illogical and ineffective. We have no more patience with the idea of 'approximate Free Trade' than with approximate honesty. Revenue tariffs involve the same absurdity. There should be but one tax for the support of Governments, and that a direct tax on property. So long as the British Government stops short of this, it is useless to talk of Great Britain, or of any other country, as a Free-Trade nation. Unrestricted trade and travel should be demanded by the people as one of the 'natural rights o' And if the people were not in the bulk asses, they would enforce this inalienable and inestimable right. But it has always been the policy of the 'governing classes' to hoodwink the masses by They want such enormous sums of money for indirect taxation. Church and State, army and navy-to support an aristocracy of priests, lawyers, and officers—that they dare not come to the people directly and ask them to pay it; and so tariffs have been invented to pick the pockets of the people without their knowing it. The logical and inevitable effect of direct taxation would be the abolition not only of the great army of Custom-house officials, but of standing armies and subsidised churches. And what a 'let up' this would be to the great body of tax-paying toilers now groaning between the upper and nether millstones! As for a 'Free Breakfast's or 'Free Dinner-table,' the very idea is preposterous. We must pay for what we do not produce—in fact, for everything we consume—except the spontaneous products of nature. But once abolish the tax on tea, coffee, sugar, &c., and the poor man's breakfast, that now costs a sixpence, might be bad at half the price. The same result would be realised in all the commodities of life. Free trade, free exchange, fair competition, can alone equalise the commerce and industry of the world. And upon this no tax should ever be imposed to support army, church, or state. Let property alone be taxed, but leave trade and labour free. We close with a single fact, which may serve as 'food for reflection.' people of England boast of being a 'self-governed people,' and yet they pay  $f_{175,000,000}$  a year for being governed!"

The general objects of the Free-Trade League may be gathered

from the following brief summary:-

This society is called the Free-Trade League, whose offices are at 447, Strand, now removed to Bela House, Alleyn Park, Dulwich, S.E. It is, in fact, the resurrection of the old Anti-Corn Law League, and is to embrace within its folds the whole population of Great Britain, regardless of class, creed, or sect, unionist, or non-unionist. If trades' unionism be (as some say it is) the bane, this league is to be the antidote, of social evils; and so it will if it secures the repeal of all laws which operate in restraint of trade. When this is done there will be a fair field in which each "can seek his own in all men's good, and all can work in noble brotherhood." When universal Free Trade is once fairly established, we may bid adieu to all famines, for then men will everywhere hold fast to, and follow out, the great economical truth, taught by Bastiat, and re-echoed by the late Mr. C. Tennant, in his "People's Blue Book"—viz., "that it is unjust and unwise to tax the labourer in his own labour, or the trader in his own trade, until he has realised the fair reward of his industry and skill." In a letter signed by H. S. Aubrey, in the Times of the 18th inst., the National Federation of employers says that "brisk trade means good wages which no combination of masters can check; and that dull trade means lower wages which no combination of workmen can raise. Both must wait until the natural conditions change." Now, the turning-point in this argument lies in the two words natural conditions. There can be no natural conditions in the question so long as the custom and excise laws remain on the statutebooks of the kingdom. These laws take away the natural condition

<sup>\*</sup> The word free here means free from tax.

of things, and are the sole cause of fluctuations which operate so disastrously for the interests of both capital and labour. An old axiom says, "God never sends mouths without sending meat to fill them;" but we have heard slipshod thinkers remark on this that, "He has sent the mouths to one house and the meat to another," never thinking that the latter state of things is brought about by stupid man-made laws—to wit, customs and excise laws, false banking laws, &c., which foster monopoly in its worst phase, tending to disorganise the equitable distribution of wealth.

If the National Federation of Employers could see their own true interests, they would, in conjunction with the organisations of labour, join the Free-Trade League with a view to attack these common enemies of mankind—customs and excise. Let them unite in this work for the common good, and the evils of trades' unions will soon die a natural death.

What is the bond of national and international peace? Free Trade. It is the key to the treasure-house of the whole universe. By it we shall be able to offer the manufactures of Great Britain in exchange for the agricultural treasures of tropical and other climates. By it, under Divine favour, we shall, by the help of the plough and the shuttle, break down the hostile boundaries of nations, and bind together in one common bond of peace and brotherhood the whole human family of nations. By it we shall be able to double the number of our ships. By it all our ships will find profitable return cargoes, and therefore we shall be able to solve Mr. Plimsoll's problem, inasmuch as there will be plenty of profitable trade for all on fair terms, and the struggle for life will be rendered more easy for all, without resorting to the abominable practices related by that worthy gentleman—at all events, in the nature of things, there will be less excuse for giving way to the temptation to do wrong.

The capital and labour question is truly a national question, and the Free-Trade League, viewing it in this light, base their operations

on the following fundamental principles, viz. :-

I. That the rights of all the classes which compose the social state are distinctly recognised and preserved that no existing *rights* are disturbed; that nothing is taken from one class to be given to another; but that the great providential arrangements, as far as we see them,

are observed, respected, and followed out.

2. That by following this great principle of doing right to all, we get justice to act with us, instead of against us; that we disarm envy. hatred, and malice; remove the stumbling-blocks to lawful authority and good order; abate, if not destroy, hostility of classes, by uniting all in one common interest of public and individual good; that we raise the moral as well as the physical condition of the people, by encouraging the growth of self-respect, by independence and industry, by successful labour.

3. That we destroy the crime of smuggling, and diminish the induce-

ment to drunkenness, adulteration of food, perjury, fraud, and violence of many sorts, and raise the moral standard of the whole nation.

4. That by setting trade and industry free from all taxes and other impediments, we shall increase the demand for our manufactures (our natural product) at home and abroad, and raise the rate of wages throughout the kingdom.

5. That we raise the rents of the artisan, and at the same time enable him to bear it, and consequently the market price of all land and house property of the kingdom, and remove or greatly reduce the burden of the poor rates.

6. That we place this country on the best foundation for preserving

the peace of the world.

The executive of the League are prepared to submit a model Budget that will realise, if needed, a larger revenue to the State than the present one, without violating any of the points in the foregoing programme, and are anxious that the whole press of the country will aid them, without regard to political creeds or religious sects, in publishing to the world so good an object, which may be summed up in the following words, which appear in their circular:—

1st. To obtain the repeal of all taxes on food, unfetter trade, and render it free from fiscal incumbrances, and at the same time to revise

taxation in such a manner as to make it just and equitable.

2nd. In carrying out these objects it is to be distinctly understood that the League has no political aim, further than to repeal the

Acts of Parliament which operate in restraint of trade.

With reference to the question of the internecine social war now at work between capital and labour, or employer and employed, it is disheartening to find by the new phase it has assumed in the shape of a "National Federation of Employers" that the social anarchy is being intensified. "Whom the Gods doom to destruction they first infatuate," and what is this battle between capital and labour but madness?

Now, it is not satisfactory to find that England, the greatest manufacturing and commercial country in the world, is divided against herself. We are told by an Authority which all Christian nations are bound to believe, that a nation or "a house divided against itself

cannot stand."

In fact, the great object of the League is to destroy root and branch the upas-tree of protective and all other fiscal duties and monopolies of production and distribution. I cannot do better than by concluding this chapter with the words of Bastiat:—"Protection is a phase of communism. The very people who object to our studying mankind under the double aspect of producers and consumers have no difficulty in making this distinction when they address themselves to legislative assemblies. We there find them demanding monopolies, or freedom of trade, according as the matter in dispute refers to a commodity which they sell, or a commodity which they purchase."

### CHAPTER IV.

"The band of commerce was designed T' associate all branches of mankind; And if a boundless plenty be the robe, Trade is the golden girdle of the globe. Wise to promote whatever ends He means, God opens fruitful nature's various scenes. Each climate needs what other climes produce, And offers something to the general use; No land but listens to the common call, And, in return, receives supplies from all. This general intercourse of mutual aid, Cheers what were else an universal shade."—Cowper.

JANG him who talks of war" has been of late, more or less, f 1 the cry of men who profess themselves to be free-traders and disciples of peace. It is, however, a little startling and inconsistent to an enlightened moralist, as every free-trader must be in the nature of things; it is quite out of harmony with this divine doctrine which seeks to do to all others as they would wish to be done unto. Free Trade is a perfect law of liberty, that will not tolerate injustice even under the sanction of civil law. Even that is doing evil that good may come. It is doing the devil's work under the cloak of Christianity. Finally, it is a direct refusal to follow the advice of Him who said, "Put up thy sword into its place, for he that taketh the sword shall perish with the sword." "Universal Peace" is not to be obtained by "hanging those who talk of war," for that in itself is war. It is not to be obtained by International Arbitration alone, for that implies that there are international disputes which require settlement, and international litigation does not harmonise, and in fact is incompatible with international peace and good-will.

I will here venture with due deference to suggest that there is a "more excellent way?" Excellent because it will tend to prevent international disputes ever arising for international tribunals to settle, or war to determine by gunpowder, iron, and blood. That "more excellent way" is simply, the universal adoption of Free Trade, or, in other words, "free ports" everywhere, both national and international —in fact, the entire abolition of Customs and Excise tariffs. "This is God'r way." "The service of God is perfect freedom." "When a man's (or a nation's) ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

So long as men refuse to recognise the truth of the motto of this work ("Universal Free Trade is the first condition of universal peace") they are sure to fail of achieving those noble ends which every true man desires for the commonwealth. It may be said that the people supply the sinews of war as well as the life-blood sacrificed in war: and if the people were wise there would be no more "war or rumours of war." True, but what is the first condition of things calculated to make the people wise? Clearly that state of things which promotes the multiplication of agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial transactions, in harmony with the multiplication of the inhabitants of God's earth. When the dwellers on this earth can go to and fro in the earth and on the seas without being interfered with by those legal but unjust impediments called Customs and Excise Laws. When ships are multiplied by virtue thereof, so that practically almost every wave of the sea shall deliver its ship-load of men and merchandise, the results of peaceful industry, from shore to shore, to give and take in mutual exchange of services without let or hindrances their surplus produce—when there is no need for commercial treaties, since every port in the world will be free-when ships can go free into every port, and the produce borne in them free from excise or fiscal interruptions, then the law of supply and demand will assert itself for the good of each and consequently the good of all. Then will men everywhere see that their own self-interest is bound up in a peace policy; a public opinion will arise spontaneously, that will be more powerful for peace preservation than tens of millions of "armed men." If this question were brought to the fore in the House of Commons, "the people would be made wise" by the discussion upon it. Who is to blame for its not being brought to the fore? Who but Messrs. Richard, Bright, Gibson, C. P. Villiers, and all the old followers of the late lamented R. Cobden. But more than any other the Press is to blame. Times in particular, and the daily press generally, especially that of the Metropolis, which may be termed the modern Babylon as a city, and as the Tower of Babel as regards the political and economical language of the Press.

Some time since the *Times* said in a leading article, with its usually quiet assumption of never being wrong—"Now, the special circumstance which has been the cause of most of the late troubles of Spain, and has prevented bitherto the possibility of escape from them, has been that she understood too literally the counsel which the Peace Society has been offering; and, having accordingly, disbanded her army, has found it beyond her power to create a new one strong enough to maintain order. England, which has been somewhat less confiding, has escaped the same fate, and the moral of the story appears to be that we ought not to dismiss all our soldiers, but rather to keep them in readiness to act when they may be wanted. That we have an army-however, strong enough, at all events, for the maintenance of peace at home, is a fortunate circumstance, for which we owe no thanks to the

Peace Society, which is never wearied of telling us that we ought to get rid of it." It would be as well, perhaps, to treat such twaddle as the above with the silent contempt it deserves, but for the fact that it appears in the leading daily paper, from which all the other dailies take the cue. The Times is purblind as regards seeing both sides of a question. It cannot see that enemies to law and order, both home and foreign, would not exist under universal free trade, and consequently no army would be necessary, and the expense would be saved.

It is a humiliating reflection that the leading journal of this great kingdom should write in such a superficial manner about a vital political principal, but this is too much the condition. Hence it may be affirmed that the question of free trade is far from being understood even by the upper ten thousand; how, then, can the masses understand it? The great delusion is that everybody thinks we in this country have free trade.

In the face of this, we have Mr. Fawcett's speech at Brighton the other night, stating that "at least three-fourths of the entire revenue of this country are obtained from taxes on commodities." How, in the

name of common-sense, can we be a free-trade country?

But what did Mr. Fawcett say, or what has he said or done in Parliament, since he has had an opportunity of saying or doing there. with a view to remove this blot upon the political economic character of the nation? As a professor of the science of political economy, as well as a loyal and patriotic citizen, it was his duty, both in Parliament and out, at every place, in season and out of season, to denounce this rotten policy of raising the Imperial revenue by a tax on commodities in any shape, or to any extent whatever. If he had taken up this question in this spirit at Brighton, in place of talking over an hour and saying nothing, the Times could not have given the "Phillipping" it did in its leader, and the country would have been grateful for at last having a definite policy placed before it for consideration. The possibility, and no doubt the probability, would then present itself of "our artisans being able to grasp at the truths contained in the 'People's Blue Book," by the late lamented Chas. Tennant, and the result would be perfect free trade, under which, in the nature of things, cooperation would be the rule, instead of the exception.

This subject may be further illustrated by the opinions of Mr. John Bright in his reply, in the *Manchester Courier*, to Mr. Morris, who stated that "The people are no better off now, relatively to the price of bread, then they were before the repeal of the Corn Laws and other protective laws;" but both those gentlemen are right and yet both

wrong in a certain sense.

The latter is right in his statement that the mass of the people are no better off, &c.; but he is wrong if he attributes the evil to the repeal of the protective laws. The former is right in his facts and in his objection to protective duties, but he his decidedly wrong in supposing

that duties for revenue purposes are not as pernicious as protective duties in their tendency to "plunge the nation into anarchy." But Mr. Bright is also wrong in supposing that we have Free Trade in corn even; for what is malt but corn in a certain shape? So long as the malt duty exists the protective system exists, but in a far more damaging form to the agricultural industry of this country than the old corn laws did to the manufacturing and trading industries. Whatever operates to the injury of one industry must in the nature of things operate to the injury of both or all. The malt duty operates as a protective duty in favour of the foreign producer, and against the native British farmer in his competition with the foreign producer in the British market. This I am prepared to prove from what has come under my own experience as owner of a farm. This is neither free trade or fair trade, either to the British producer or consumer, and it is the rock on which the Gladstonian Government Ship went to pieces. A worthy prelate not many weeks ago, commenting on the social anarchy then raging in the agricultural districts, asked the farmers if they were going mad. This, in my humble opinion, would be a proper question to put to the Conservative Government, if they do not make the malt tax repeal the leading measure of the next sessions of Parliament. The repeal of this tax is decidedly a Conservative measure, and this may account for the so-called Free-Trade Liberal Government shirking it the last five years and adopting a lot of patchwork blundering and plundering measures, no better than "drawing nectars in a sieve," to hoodwink the millions and deceive them with the appearance of doing something for the nation, whilst, in reality, their principal performance, like mountebanks, has been to obtain place, power, pay, and patronage, and ever so many good things beginning with the same letter—but their efforts to prevent poverty and pauperism have been practically nil.

There are other views of this great question, not less significant, that it is deemed desirable to consider in a moral, social and industrial aspect. The working-man stands in a position suggestive of many things as important to society as to himself. As a body, they begin generally to see and feel the truth of the facts and principles embodied

in the following noble utterance:

"By contemplating the position of man on earth, and the evident intention of the Creator, we arrive at the principle inductively that freedom of person, opinion, contract, and exchange, are the fundamental rights of mankind, most conducive to human happiness, increase, and improvement, and that violations of them are injurious to the human race. Adopting, then, these fundamental principles, our great political economists found a state of society existing altogether violating these rights, and therefore afflicted with innumerable evils. And has not history amply vindicated their doctrines? For what have brought the greatest evils on men? Slavery, religious persecution, and commercial restriction. During the last 1,800 years what

have been the cause of the greatest number of wars? History answers, Religion (so-called) and commercial restrictions. If these doctrines had always been held to be true, as they now are by all enlightened persons, nine-tenths of the wars which have desolated the earth during the last eighteen centuries would never have occurred."

What are the results which in the nature of things inevitably follow? After wars heavy taxation must follow, and the inventors of the system of taxing commodities (the land proprietors) were never more mistaken than when they thought that by taxing the life-gear of the masses they were throwing the burden from their own shoulders on to those of the masses; for as all material wealth springs from land and labour being wedded, so whatever interposes to obstruct or to render the union unhappy for one side must render it unhappy for the other. "All taxes, no matter how they are levied, eventually fall upon the landowner."\*

It is through indirect taxation that the governing classes of society mainly secure exemption for themselves from bearing their just share of the national expenditure. Nor should it be overlooked that, although the greater portion of the taxes are extracted by forms of law from the wages of the working population, the major part thereof is disbursed to protect the property, and to find them place and power with large salaries. If these facts were known and understood by the working-men electors of England, no man would be sent to the next Parliament who would not pledge himself to a thorough reform of our fiscal duties, and the abolition of our stupid and unjust Customs and Excise.

These are not hasty opinions picked up and adopted without

mature thought and calm reflection.

Turgot, the great French economist, held that industry should not be interrupted by indirect taxes in its struggles to create wealth, but that the revenue of the country ought to be raised from realised property direct. Inasmuch as land and industry are the bases of all material wealth, and as the revenue of the State is part and parcel of that material wealth, it is generally agreed amongst our most distinguished political economists that taxes, no matter how levied, whether direct or indirect, the burden must eventually fall upon the landholder; and that direct taxes paid from the rent or dividend, or (as our worthy professor Leoni Levi has it), "spontaneous" incomes, cannot be evaded under a competent and impartial valuation, it is argued that this is not only the most moral and righteous way of raising the

<sup>\*</sup>Because land is the fountain, so to speak, from which all useful things are drawn, and though the landowners may harass and ruin commerce by the suicidal attempt to make the industrial classes bear the burden of State taxes by the interposition of obstacles in the shape of Customs and Excise, yet the ruin thus brought upon trade, manufactures, and commerce must recoil upon themselves; and in the common ruin, though they fall the last, great will be their fall.

revenue, but that it would save the pockets of the landed interest to the extent of 177 millions sterling annually, as compared with the present system. Perhaps the landed proprietors will not find this truth out until there be no tenants to till the soil—not until Goldsmith's deserted village becomes a reality, when it is too evident that—

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey, Where wealth accumulates and men decay; Princes and kings may flourish or may fade, A breath can make them as a breath hath made; But a bold peasantry, the country's pride, When once destroyed can never be supplied.

The truth is this—viz., that this country, with all its vaunted pretensions for free trade, still collects a considerably larger proportion of the revenue by indirect taxes than almost any other country. We give the comparison in detail from a pamphlet called a Prize Essay, issued by the Financial Reform Association, Liverpool.

The writer (page 8) says:—"From the period of the Conquest to the sitting of the Long Parliament in 1643, the expenses of Government were in a great measure defrayed by the lands of England, which were expressly held on the condition of making these payments.

thus affording a self-acting check to State extravagance.

"But through the imbecility of King John they got the sole power of making the fiscal laws. At the time of the Commonwealth a still further change took place. The landholders, having become the sole legislators, patriotically freed themselves from the lien which the State had upon their properties. The weight of taxation which should constitutionally have been sustained by the land, was transferred to the products of industry. So long as the entire weight of taxation, however, pressed but lightly upon the energies of the people, this organic change in the mode of obtaining supplies remained unobserved." The relative amounts of the land tax of France, Prussia, Austria, and Great Britain, are given in the first chapter, page 3.

Thus we see that about this era (1851) the cost of our Government almost equalled the cost of three of the most powerful nations on the Continent of Europe. What is the moral of this? Taken in conjunction with the subsequent history of the great Powers alluded to, it proves that the one which spends, or rather wastes, the least of her substance in playing at soldiers in times of peace, is the strongest when the day of battle comes. It also proves that land tax is a more

peaceful tax.

Mr. Levi proposes to abolish the income tax on schedule D, or professions and trades, and to get from the house duty £4,000,000 in place of £1,300,000. He says, "I do not see any reason why houses of the value of £10 or £20 a year should escape this form of taxation." But he does not propose first to relieve the people from those taxes on

tea, coffee, sugar, malt, tobacco, wine, spirits, and indirectly a tax on butchers' meat and dairy produce.

Here are nine very cogent reasons for allowing "houses of the

value of £10 to £20 to escape the house duty."

Mr. Levi ought to know that bad, immoral, and unjust as the income tax on profession and trade is (and we admit it is so), yet it is extremely more just, moral, economical, and expedient and less wasteful in its incidence than taxes on commodities. We say he ought to know this, and we think if the question were put to him he would frankly admit it. He says, "I admit that many houses of business and public companies, now paying income tax upon enormous annual profits, would make a favourable exchange by remission of that tax, and the imposition of an additional house duty." Now here is a thing admitted which, in the minds of all right-thinking and just men, ought to be the condemnation of his whole scheme. Again, he admits that the widow's mite will be taxed under his scheme, whilst the man of £10,000 a year goes comparatively scot-free. He says, the only objection urged against any increase of the house tax, especially upon houses of £10 to £20 rent, is that it may act as a barrier to improving the workmen's houses, but he does not propose to abolish those taxes on food which sweep from the working man one-third of his wages, in the price of everything he buys with them, and this is the great blot of his scheme. In two articles alone, the consumer has to pay upwards of ninety-eight millions for what cost the producer only £17,750,000, all because Government must have £21,643,600, as a tax, making cost and tax £39,393,600. Thus, taking 1869, we find in that year the system of taxing food, wasted of the toiler's substance no less a sum than £58,732,000, in order to realise £21,643,600 for the revenue. Now, let us assume that a fair profit to the trade would be twenty per cent., and the tax abolished, that would bring the cost (exclusive of tax) up to £21,300,000 to the consumer, in place of £98,125,600, effecting a saving to the country of £76,825,600, or more than the gross revenue of the country. Out of this saving of  $f_{176,825,600}$ , we could pay the direct tax, £21, 643,600, leaving a saving of £55,182,000, wherewith to buy useful things, and treble the home trade of the country thereby. This is according to the official return of 1869; that of 1872 is considerably larger. What scope is there here for ameliorating the condition of the working classes, not only in housing, but also in feeding and clothing; and above all, employing in profitable and wealth-producing labour! If these taxes are to be retained, no scheme of shuffling will be satisfactory.

I venture to affirm that a juster, wiser, and a more efficient system of national taxation will become apparent to my readers as we proceed

in this general inquiry.

The above appeared in the papers as a challenge to Mr. Levi to confute if he could, but he did not take up the gauntlet thus thrown down to him.

#### CHAPTER V.

"For ourselves, we consider that government is and ought to be nothing whatever but common force organised, not to be an instrument of oppression and mutual plunder among citizens; but, on the contrary, to secure to every one his own, and to cause justice and security to reign."

"Protection is a violation perpetrated by the law upon the rights of property; and certainly it is very remarkable that, in the midst of so many other debates, this double legal stourge, the sorrowful inheritance of the Old World, should be the only one which can, and perhaps will, cause the rupture of the Union. Indeed, a more astounding fact, in the heart of society, cannot be conceived than this—that law should have become an instrument of injustice. And if this fact occasions consequences so formidable to the United States, where there is but on exception, what must it be to us in Europe, where it is a principle—a system?"—M. F. Bastiat.

DIFFER from Mr. Duff in regard to the reduction of armaments being sought for by diplomatic means, or indeed any means until the ground is cleared for action by the operation of a universal Free Trade policy. As regards want of a "more distinct statement of foreign policy," he goes on to remark of the sacredness of treaty engagements. But under a system of universal or international freedom of commerce, I hold that no foreign policy will be needed, as all men will feel as brothers, and consequently the word foreigner will be swept from the vocabulary of all nations; and as to treaties, they will no longer be needed when one nation opens its ports free to all other nations without let or hindrance, to enter without interference, in a fiscal sense; and when that is done universally amongst civilised nations the people of those nations will very soon become wise in the sense that great and charming poet Cowper meant, when he said:—

"But war's a game, which, were their subjects wise, Kings would not play at."

Then he speaks of "British moral support." This, I hold, will never go for much until we have set the world an example of fiscal purity, and show that we believe more faithfully in the policy of friend-ship than enmity.

"That moral support would be stronger if we were better informed." All this, Free Trade would set right, inasmuch as it would facilitate intercourse amongst the peoples of the whole world, and bring us face to face. The writer would have opened up a trade, and would have

travelled the length and breadth of the globe for that purpose, were it not for the rotten fiscal systems, especially here and the United States; and it is fair to assume what prevents one person may prevent millions.

Mr. Lowe, when proposing to reduce the sugar duties, said: "I wish it to be clearly understood that, in making this proposal, I am not preparing the way for either further reduction or for abolition, but that I have gone as far as I intend, and make this declaration in order to give stability to the trade and free it from periodical annoyance, owing to apprehensions of change." Now, it is a pity Mr. Lowe did not go the whole length, and abolish the duty altogether, on the same good grounds.

Thus the vital interests of the whole mass of the people are to be sacrificed (including both electors and non-electors) in order that the party in power may, by a little trick of political legerdemain, play off

one party against another.

To meet with fallacies about free trade from the lips or writings of Protectionists, is nothing surprising, but when such cling to professed disciples of Richard Cobden, under a desire to bolster up a position in which one has great personal interest at stake, and the interests of a party combined, it is not altogether easy to be divinely amiable with such. We often find individuals in a position false in itself, which is always distressing to an honest man who is obliged to listen to the words of truth without daring to avow or deny them, lest their party should be compromised. A more humiliating position cannot be well imagined in the common affairs of life. I hold that this is always a condition that hampers and deforms the honest and spontaneous action of men in office, so that party interests are allowed to dominate in the councils of State over those of the public in general, and the working classes in particular. Hence, it is easy to understand how national affairs and political principles are tinctured with various party-colours to meet the popular vision. This makes the great difficulty in the way of gaining a clear and accurate perception of the facts and political condition. A direct tax of say 2s. 6d. in the pound on all house-property, to wit, is immediately felt to be very large, but double that amount is not viewed in that light if levied as an indirect tax. To understand this accurately, requires a little sober thinking and some fiscal knowledge.

The lack of this information has led to the current opinion that a house-tax of that amount could not be collected under the present state of popular feeling. On this point I have been advised by even men of mark to consult Mr. Gladstone, but the givers of such gratuitous advice overlook the fact that I have already consulted a greater fiscal statesman Richard Cobden. Such advisers forget that before attempting to levy such a house-tax that a much heavier and more onerous burden of taxes should be removed from the shoulders of each householder. A burden that would take from every one with an income of one pound

per week and a family of five persons to keep, at least one-third of that income without giving value for it, by making the price of every article of consumption so high that the income loses its purchasing-power to about that amount.

Now, what would 2s. 6d. in the pound come to in the year to a man in a house at £6 per annum? It would be 15s., or about 1s. 3d. per month, and so on in proportion. The same man having a wife and family under the present system of taxing food has to pay, in the shape of high prices caused by taxing commodities, no less than 5s. per week, so that the relief would be under the new system

extremely great.

It would be a libel on people of common-sense to say that they would not hail such a change as that of direct taxation when once their eyes are opened, either by debates in Parliament, the press, or on public platforms. Concurrently with this, there would be a lessening of the national expenditure, for this is the essence of the plan. When taxes are paid direct, and the parties who levy them are those who will have to pay their fair share, there will then be a better muster of members in the House when the supplies are voted, and every vote will be canvassed and checked with a view to knowing the reason why and wherefore, and thus the best possible check and control of Government disbursements will be exercised.

It is with deep regret that I say Mr. Gladstone is not a statesman of that high class for which he once had credit, or he would have recognised the fact and acted thereon as he did when he was lifted into that supreme position of Chancellor of the Exchequer by the voice of the people, and fondly called "the People's William." He was then believed to be the active champion of true free-trade principles, and if he had acted up to that policy and expectation after he had got to be Premier in 1868, he would have remained the most popular man, minister, and statesman of this great nation till the day of his death; and his fair fame in the pages of history would have been untarnished and undefield by the errors and blunders that threw him out of power in 1874.

It is the duty of a great statesman to indicate the thing that is wise, right, and just, and cause it to be debated in the legislature from which the press would lay the results before the people, and thus enable them to understand the matter, and discriminate between

sound and unsound members of Parliament on the subject.

When custom duties are abolished, twice the number of ships would be built—twice the number of persons would be employed in all the various ramifications of trade and agriculture. The Hon. A. Wells, a short time since, made a startling statement at the Cobden Club, viz.—"If the whole people of the United States should now stop working and saving and repairing waste and deterioration, and devote themselves to idleness and amusement, living upon their own accumulations, or those of their fathers, three years would be amply

sufficient to starve three-fourths of them out of existence, and reduce the one-fourth to a condition of semi-barbarism."

If this be true of the United States of America, it applies with tenfold force to Great Britain, whose native acres are only made to produce food for thirteen millions out of the thirty-three millions of mouths to be filled, and consequently our supplies would be very quickly exhausted. Our united safety, therefore, rests on constant production. This is a stern truth that cannot be too clearly and keenly appreciated by labour and capital. Hence, we perceive that the results of the late and present conflict of these great factors of human production, in the form of strikes and lock-outs, cannot be other than ruinous to the best interests and safety of the commonwealth.

Having no faith in the wisdom of strikes and lock-outs as means of permanent advantage to master or man, or to the general public, who, as a whole, are only benefited by increase of production—for this those untoward conditions prevent—I feel it the more necessary to urge in season and out of season (if there be such) the total abolition of Customs and Excise duties, which would render strikes and lock-outs next to impossible. I have no trust in the professions of philanthropy for the poor man, of those whose cry is, "Educate and raise working-men in the scale of society," whilst they take no steps to give them common justice, move not a finger to deliver them from the swindling and demoralising results of indirect taxation. To tax food and labour is a cruel mockery—equal to the heartless conduct of giving a hungry child a stone when he asks for bread.

### CHAPTER VI.

"WHOEVER thought of contesting seriously the superiority of Exchange to Isolation?"—BASTIAT.

REE Trade in one or more things, and not in all, is in no true sense Free Trade as here understood. For example, you may do away with protection tariffs and yet be as far as ever from Free Trade; for so long as you have a tax on articles of commerce, no matter whether of foreign or domestic production, you are violating the principle of Free Trade. To tax food and leave raiment untaxed is a vicious injustice tending to rob the poor to favour the rich, which is denounced by divine authority. Taking the revenue of the State out of the poor man's expenditure in necessaries of living, and leaving untouched the luxuries of clothing of the rich is neither honest nor just. Neither ought to be taxed.

The manner of raising the necessary imperial revenue will be fully shown in these pages without industrial income-tax, whether on trades, professions, or manufactures. Under the principle of true Free Trade

no such tax would be required or tolerated.

This universal Free Trade would be speedily a realised fact if England, or any other great nation, were to adopt Free Trade in everything, without regard to what other countries might do, for the beneficial results would be so great that all civilised countries would follow the example, induced by the promptings of self-interest and public opinion all over the world. Freedom of commerce is the first condition and safeguard of universal liberty.

Under the influence of these principles the spontaneous expansion of old and the opening up of new fields of honest labour would harmonise with and meet the requirement of the increase of population for many generations, so that none need fear a pauper's fate in life or death. Under this perfect law of liberty—of Free Trade—it would be out of the power of any class to oppress another class,

or a class an individual.

As regards the policy of Free Trade throughout the civilised world, it is obviously our duty and interest to initiate and carry it out to the fullest extent without waiting to see what action other countries take in the matter. It would be more incumbent on us to set the example since we are exempt from the dangers arising from the former policy of protection. Our adoption of such would be regarded as an experiment for the benefit of other nations, the result of which would be

extremely edifying and profitable to the whole world, whilst its success would lead our neighbours more or less quickly into the same career

of enlightened improvement and national prosperity.

The commercial and manufacturing supremacy of Great Britain is in danger, and it becomes us as sensible men to ask—from what cause? The obvious answer is—the mouths of the millions who co-operate to produce articles of commerce are filled or half filled with dear food caused by our Customs and Excise system, yet our leading politicians and manufacturers are not able to see the only possible remedy, as though struck with judicial blindness—and unless some thoroughly Free Trade measure, such as the abolition of all Excise and Custom duties be speedily made things of past history, society will be soon disturbed by a set of conditions that may be easily predicted, but not wisely and well directed. A variety of considerations of this nature induced me on public grounds to write to Lord Derby a letter, which subsequently appeared in the Farmer's Herald, and comment upon a speech of his as follows:—

## Extract of letter to the Right Honourable Lord Derby.

Your Lordship says "that nobody expected the electoral change of 1867 would result in the Conservatives being placed in power within seven years." I beg respectfully here to differ from you, inasmuch as I had, long before this, prophesied the event, not from any merits due to the Conservatives as a party, but from the tendency of their opponents deserting their ancient flag of Free Trade. For example, when Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer, he gained (instinctively) the affections of the masses of the people by reducing and repealing food taxes, i.e., Customs and Excise duties, thereby impressing a feeling in the minds of the people that he was determined to go on until he had finished the noble work that the late R. Cobden had begun in 1846. So much so, that in 1868 the country manifested its confidence in him by placing him on the very pinnacle of power with an overwhelming majority; but, unhappily for him and the country, from that moment he began to pursue an opposite and retrograde policy, which, in the nature of things, resulted in his fall in 1874, as a just retribution for betraying the confidence of the people.

Third.—I quite concur with your Lordship in that whatever troubles the waters of society, the artisan and the labourer are the first sufferers by the loss of their daily bread, and that it is true, with one exception, that "popular politicians never gave any man better wages or a better house to live in." Where do we look for this exception? In the person of the late-lamented Richard Cobden; he and the small body of men who followed him and formed the nucleus to commence with, in agitating for the repeal of the Corn Laws, "did more for the honour and glory of Great Britain than did all the great warriors from Agincourt to Waterloo." Those "popular politicians" did not only give

better wages and better houses to live in to millions of artisans and labourers, but also by their efforts doubled or trebled the rent-roll of

your Lordship, and that of the order to which you belong.

Fourth.--Your Lordship says there are no grievances for the working-class to complain of, and you ask the question—the vital question— "Is the working-man taxed above his fair share? If he is a teetotaller, he contributes literally nothing to the revenue, except some 30 per cent. on the tea or coffee which he may use. Nearly every other article he consumes is altogether free; income-tax, house-tax, stamp duty cannot touch him. If he likes his beer and tobacco-and I for one see no reason why he should not—he pays on these articles like everybody else; and since we must have taxes that fall on luxuries, they are probably the fairest of all."

Now, on this vital question I must venture to borrow your Lordship's own words, and say that "my answer is that I accept the premises, but I do not see that they lead to the conclusions." Everybody admits we must have taxes, but it does not, therefore, follow that the poor man's luxuries should bear two-thirds of the burden; neither does it follow that it is wise to raise the revenue through the mouth by taxes on commodities that pass into it. Is the working-man taxed above his fair share? The printed matter from the Farmers' Herald for December 1st gives figures showing details to prove that a man with a wife and family, working hard on the land, which is a type of millions, smoking 2 oz. of tobacco per week, and drinking a pint of beer to his dinner and a pint to his supper, and his wife half-a-pint each meal; by that moderate consumption (which your Lordship allows) is made to pay a tax of 2s. 3d. per week on a weekly wage of 15s.; this is equivalent to a 15 per cent. income-tax, without counting anything for the "30 per cent." on his tea if he takes any such luxury; but I doubt very much the estimate on tea which the poor drink being under 50 per cent., and in a vast number of cases I know it reaches above 100 per cent. when the various profits on the duty, as well as the tea, are counted. But the evils of the tea tax do not stop here: there is the evil of keeping the official, and thinking, also the governing portion of the 400,000,000 of Chinese minds in a state of enmity and jealousy against us as traders, by which we are barred from exchanging our cloth, iron rails, &c., for their tea and other produce to such an extent as would quadruple our commerce and double the rentroll of the country in a very short time. But why should not the working-man be taxed directly in such manner as will make him pay his just share of taxes in proportion to his means without "I gi lative interference" with trade? The thing can be done without mury to any class, and not only so, but to the great gain of every class.

Your Lordship says that "Parliament is very jealous of legislative interference about principles of demand and supply." What are the Customs and Excise establishments but such interference? What are trades'-union abuses but a pernicious interference with "principles of supply and demand?" You take from the working-man from 15 to 20 per cent. of an income-tax, what is equivalent to taxing his little luxuries, which, if paid direct, in a straightforward John Bull way, would save him three-fourths of the amount without injury to the revenue, or to any other class; he would then have the amount thus saved left in his pocket wherewith to pay the rent of a better dwelling, to pay the school fees, and enable him to educate his children without State interference.

Your lordship says the country has no grievances, and asks "what has become of them?" May I venture to remind you of the following,

viz.:—

1st. Foot-and-mouth disease, which is ruining two-thirds of the small farmers of this country; on this grievance I would refer you to a letter in the *Chamber of Agriculture Journal* of Dec. 27th, 1875, signed "Thomas Robertson."

2nd. Local Taxation grievance.

3rd. Home Rule.

4th. The Strikes and Lock-outs, past, present, and future; the closing of iron-works, bankruptcy of the owners, and the list of bank-

rupts in general for 1875.

5th. Pauperism, crime, emigration to America for fear of dying in the workhouse, destitution and death by starvation for lack of employment, especially in the ranks of the educated classes, this grievance proves that our statesmen ignore the great principle laid down in the proverb, "That the glory of a country is in the multitude of its

people."

6th. Mr. Plimsoll's grievance which affects the lives of British seamen, who may one day be required to protect our shores from a foreign foe, and which a thousand Acts of Parliament will never cure so long as trade is shackled by Import and Excise duties cramping the growth of our commercial navy, and so long as the ship-owners and traders are by law and by extreme competition tempted to over-insurance of a ship and cargo, and then pray for the loss of both in order that they may else out a profit at the cost of the lives of our gallant sailors. Under a system of Free Trade their profits would be made legitimately, inasmuch as they would be enabled to secure a cargo both ways.

7th. The County Franchise grievance.

8th. The Foreign Loan nuisance, which shows where the hardearned wages of the thrifty labourer "who likes his beer and tobacco," and takes them in moderation, go, after providing sufficient gin-palaces to demoralise his weaker brethren who abuse them.

oth. The Limited Liability Company abuses, which may be characterised as a new mode of playing at "Heads I win, tails you

lose."

10th. The Land grievance. This is more serious than your lord-ship seems to think, when you ask the following question, viz. :—" If

there be a wish among working-men to become owners of some small piece of land, what is easier than to form Companies which will buy up estates and will divide them so that small lots may be purchased, and the payments spread over a term of years as is now done in cases of houses in towns?" Your Lordship also says, "Personally, I should not feel inclined to recommend any man whose savings are small to put them into land, but what I do say is that if working-men have that desire there is no obstacle in our laws to make its gratification impossible or difficult. The sole obstacle, the legal cost of transferring small pieces of land, has been dealt with by recent legislation, and we hope done away with."

I regret to say that my experience compels me to join issue with your Lordship on this vital question. I can give two cases in point as to the transfer of land. The first is a small plot in a town whereon stands a good cottage and a little outhouse for washing and placing fuel; this plot and house cannot be sold or even given away, the "obstacle" being that the cost of transfer is more than the value of the property. The second case is with regard to a farm with house and outbuildings of 200 and odd acres, the transfer of which when I bought it cost about £150, and on asking my solicitor, after the Land Transfer Law had

been "dealt with" a short time ago, he advised me that it would cost me another £150 to have it put on the registration system under the

new law.

These are two cases illustrating "obstacles" which your Lordship has been so fortunate as to avoid or get over, and which it is not possible for a working-man to avoid! But there are several more obstacles which the law interposes, and which a working-man who "likes his beer and tobacco" cannot get over. Although he and his family are satisfied with the moderate consumption of three pints a day, and two ounces of tobacco per week, he is made by law to contribute 2s. 3d. tax on these two articles alone, out of the miserable pittance of 15s. or 20s. a week, as I have elsewhere shown: this alone is an obstacle which prevents him saving the money wherewith to make the investment of land alluded to. But the great misfortune and injustice of all is that he should be paying this tax without knowing When the working-man gets educated into the fact that such laws are tolerated and perpetuated by Conservative and Liberal law makers, I fear he will no longer consider submission and obedience to them "compatible with self-respect," &c.

Now, my Lord, you will naturally ask wherein do we hope to gain Universal Free Trade? My answer is, simply by England adopting it in its entirety; but your Lordship may say then, How are we to raise the revenue of the country? My answer is, directly from the purse instead of through the mouth, in such a way as to make the burdens of State taxes bear a proportional pressure relatively to their

<sup>\*</sup> See page 145.

means upon every class of society, as shown in the "People's Blue Book," p. 357, where the author shows a saving to the taxpayer of £177,630,970 per annum, and this theory is proved to be true, by the fact that by the repeal of duty on two articles it is shown that a saving of £40,000,000 per annum would be effected. Just contemplate the beneficent effects of this vast sum being set at liberty, to be employed in the home trade in draining the twenty millions of acres already in the hands of farmers, besides the vast area of waste lands unoccupied at home and in the colonies.

By this policy all taxpayers would gain, both rich and poor, in a financial, moral, and social point of view. The Government would gain morally and economically; a basis would thus be laid for a lasting peace and prosperity; all men would then see that England was the safest place to live in; emigration to America would stop in the nature of things until she adopted the same policy of entire Free Trade, which she would soon find out was the only sure bond of peace and goodwill, internally as well as internationally. And all this might be brought about by a Conservative Government without inconsistency, without disturbing any of the great institutions of the country in Church and State; King, Lords and Commons, all would remain much as at present, but greatly improved as the condition of the people improved. The only alteration would be the raising of the revenue direct in place of indirect. May God grant that your Lordship may bring the question before the House as one paramount to all other questions, is the prayer of your humble servant.

The same general reason that induced me to write the above on public grounds, in support of the cause of the people and the abolition of our oppressive and unjust Customs and Excise, led me also to review the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget for 1876, a careful perusal of which will suggest to the working-men of this great nation several very important facts, and the principles of national revenue

and expenditure.

## THE BUDGET OF 1876.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer made his financial statement on April 3rd in the House of Commons, by which we were informed that the expenses of governing the country had increased by about two millions a year since the Conservatives came into office. This, in effect, is equivalent to telling us that they intend to throw themselves over a moral precipice and to drag the country with them.

We are living under military and judicial despotism, and apparently we shall not wake up to the fact until it will be too late to regain our lost freedom. Yet we are said to be at peace with all the world. The *Times* of April 4th, in its first leader, says, "We appear to be more than ever confronted with that unpleasant consequence of recent changes, that

the power of voting expenditure is practically vested in one class, and the obligation of providing the means of meeting it is thrown upon another." Just so. One half of the House of Commons is composed of men who are either directly or indirectly connected with militaryism, and the majority of the other half are connected with the legal profession, or other monopolies equally dangerous; and these are they who have the power (and use it unchecked) of voting the nation's expenditure; whilst the working bees are the class who have to provide the

means to pay the bills.

When Sir Stafford Northcote entered upon his labours as Chancellor of the Exchequer, some two or three years ago, he did one wise thing, and thereby conciliated a great many prejudicesthat was the total repeal of the sugar duty. He also bought (for a short time) the goodwill of the country party by giving them a sugarplum in the shape of a subsidy from the Imperial taxes to the relief of the local rates. This, we told them at the time, they would find a doubtful boon; it was only shifting the pea from one thimble to the other without the people seeing exactly which thimble; or, in other words, passing a shilling out of the right-hand pocket and putting it into the left; and, as the Times now says, "These subventions to the local authorities are direct offerings to extravagance. As gifts from the Imperial exchequer, they weaken the spirit of local thrift, and the produce of Imperial taxes is dissipated to worse than no purpose." It is a miserable attempt to put off the evil day. The Times also sees the trick, which has been perpetrated in the present Budget, in tinkering with the income-tax. Sir Stafford is said to be throwing in a bribe to the classes whose incomes range under £400 a year by modifying the exemptions so as to practically relieve them from the pressure of the extra penny now levied. This is a very nice bait, but if they be tempted thereby to enter the trap, they deserve all that will inevitably await them hereafter as the consequences of foul class legislation.

The writer in the *Times* would fain make us believe that the lower and middle classes are the parties who are placed in the position of being able to levy taxes, or vote the expenditure, whilst the upper classes have to provide the means; but we are painfully made aware that the facts are against him, when we come to analyse the present

Budget for raising the revenue.\*

The writer in the *Times* may say, but who sends the M.P.'s to Parliament? Is it not the lower classes by virtue of Household Suffrage? This may be true, but it is not "The whole truth, and nothing but the truth." There is the county franchise which requires

<sup>\*</sup> We find that the two first items which belong to the lower classes—viz., Customs and Excise, amount to within a fraction of 48 millions out of 65½ millions.

rectifying, in order to emancipate the farmer and agricultural labour class, and a whole host of other things too numerous to mention here require rectification before it can be said that the masses have

equality of political power.

The writer in the *Times* concludes in the following words:—"A patriotic Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot do better than enter upon the consideration of the problem how to make the variations in national expenditure directly felt by all classes of the community." But

the Times will not grant the first condition.

It is not likely that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will take up this challenge; but we will endeavour to supply his place, and, for argument sake, assume the position of a real "patriotic Chancellor of the Exchequer," and give to the country for its consideration the wayhow to solve the problem of "how to make the various classes of the community feel the State burdens pressing upon them relatively to their means, and proportionally to the services each individual receives from the State. And not only that, but it will also tend to abolish all those vexatious interferences with commercial and manufacturing operations, which are at present the bane of society. Our system of raising the revenue will tend also to make those who vote the estimates, and those who spend them (which at present are one and the same class) think twice, if not thrice, before they make a foolish or wasteful vote of expenditure.

After providing for the repeal of all present taxes, it is as follows,

viz.:—

ıst.	Property Tax, 10 p	er cer	nt. on perty	the an	nual	(36.061.525
2nd.	Personal or Housel					300,0,0-,0-,0-0
	£, io per house				•••	34,500,000
3rd.	Post Office Service	•••		• • •		4,671,230
4th.	Telegraph ditto	•••				100,761
5th.	Crown Lands	• • • •	•••		• • •	447,723
6th.	Miscellaneous		•••	•••	•••	3,205,253
To	tal estimated revenu	e			••• 2	£78,986,492

### ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE.

ıst.	Permanent charge of debt		•••	₺	27,700,000
2nd.	Interest, &c., on loans		•••	•••	160,000
3rd.	Charge on Suez Loan		•••		150,000
4th.	Consolidated Fund Charge	s	•••	• • •	1,509,000
5th.	Army		• • •		13,000,000
ðth.	Army Purchase Commission	)11	•••	•••	464,000
7th.	Navy		•••		10,000,000
8th.	Civil Services				12,000,000

9th. Collection of revenue		•••	1,000,000
10th. Packet Service	•••		852,000
11th. Repayment of Indian charges			170,000
12th. Manchester Post Office			100,000
		-	<del></del>
Total expenditure		₹	67,105,000

Thus leaving a surplus of £11,881,492, which would be available for paying off the National Debt as far as it would go, or to the relief of that class (if any) which may chance to be unfairly weighted by the incidence of the new mode of raising the Imperial revenue. Should it be found, for instance, that Io per cent. was too high for a property tax, as compared to the personal tax, the surplus could go to reducing it to 7½ per cent. the first year; and, inasmuch as our system would be granting "the first condition of universal peace," the natural and logical result would be that militaryism would die a natural death, and the 5,000,000 or 6,000,000 of drones under arms in Europe would be gradually draughted into the ranks of commerce, manufacture, or agriculture, as the case might be, which would be far more honourable occupation than that of cutting their neighbours' throats.

This would relieve us from the heavy army and navy estimates, which in time would give us another surplus to deal with as we found expedient. Sir Stafford Northcote concluded his budget speech as follows:—"I express my regret that it has fallen to my lot to propose increased taxation, but I do not see how it could be avoided,"

Let him read the above scheme.

We now give Sir Stafford's figures :-

First he stated the estimated expenditure as follows:-

Permanent charge of deb		•••	•••		(27,700,000
Interest, &c., on local loa		•••		• • •	160,000
Charge of Suez Loan		• • • •		• • •	150,000
Consolidated Fund charg	es	•••		• • •	1,590,000
Army		•••			15,282,000
Army Purchase Commiss					464,000
Navy					11,289,000
Civil Services					13,309,000
Post Office					3,120,000
Collection of Revenue (C				•••	2,730,000
Telegraph Service (College					1,280,000
Packet Service				•••	852,000
				•••	
Repayment of Indian cha					170,000
Manchester Post Office	•••	•••	•••	• • • •	100,000
Total for 1876-7			•••	#	78,044,000

Next he stated the figures of the estimated revenue, premising that they had been prepared with care, and with a full consciousness that the state of trade was not very flourishing. They are as follows:—

Customs						· · · £	20,250,000
Excise			• • •	• • • •	• • • •		27,650,000
Stamps			• • • •		•••		11,000,000
Land Tax a	nd Hor	ise Di	uty			•	2,500,000
Property an	d Incor	ne Ta	ìх			• • • •	4,100,000
Post Office						• • • •	5,950,000
Telegraph :	Service						1,325,000
Crown Lan	ds						395,000
Miscellaneo	านร						4,100,000
Tota	l					∄	77,270,000

A variety of circumstances connected with the use of the figures above, how the necessary taxes for the purposes of government might be collected though the whole unjust system of Customs and Excise were utterly swept away, have given a distinct name to the items so expressed, as "Briggs' Model Budget."

This is a distinction I did not seek, but which I deem an honour to have assisted in any way to popularise. I do not blush to have that Model Budget affiliated on me, though honour and honesty prompt me to ascribe all the salient features to my late friend Mr. Charles

Tennant, the author of the "People's Blue Book."

Taking that Model Budget in my hand, I can with perfect confidence place it by the side of any budget submitted to Parliament by either Liberal or Conservative Chancellor for many generations. For justice, wise economy, and practicability, I will resolutely stand by it on public grounds as against any budget hitherto framed by any living Chancellor of Her Majesty's Exchequer. I do this with all the more confidence and propriety, because I consider myself in this particular only the exponent of the author of the admirable and invaluable book abovementioned.

I am also fully convinced of the comparatively great ease by which this most desirable fiscal change may become an accomplished fact, without disturbing the order of business a single day. I am fully aware and I frankly admit it, that this budget would be, if carried out, a great revolution, and also a social one in our country; and through this kingdom be gradually extended to the whole world—adding marvellously to its wealth, peace, and civilisation. As the principles on which it rests are sound in truth and justice, how can the results be otherwise than beneficial to the whole human race?

Concurrently with this change of the foundation of taxation all the Customs and Excise duties would be abolished. A local edition of a Kendal newspaper said of this budget with far more truth than

badinage:—"The immediate result would be the abolition of the malt tax, and a pint of beer for a penny, which ought to make an election cry far more effective than the repeal of the Corn Laws and the inevitable cheap loaf ever did; and the man who adopts it ought to secure the suffrage of not merely a borough like Kendal, but the whole of England. Again, we may note that this budget would secure not only a free breakfast-table,\* but a free dinner and supper-table to every class of the community—a consummation that no Liberal financier has ever yet dared to suggest." Here is a principle and a policy which would give immortal fame and true glory to any M.P. who has the moral courage to stand up in the House of Commons and persistently advocate till it become a fact accomplished.

The leading principle of this Model Budget is, as all my readers perceive, based on direct taxation, and it may be here stated that the following twelve reasons are sufficient to justify the principle, and I think they ought to lead all honest politicians to adopt that fiscal

formula.

#### THE TWELVE REASONS.

First. Because it is forbidden by Holy Writ to interpose impedi-

ments between the people and their food supply.

Second. Because a direct system of taxation is most just, economical, equitable, wise and moral; it is most unjust to tax food and not raiment, inasmuch as raiment is the rich man's luxury, and food is the poor man's necessary.

Third. Because universal free trade is the first condition of uni-

versal peace.

Fourth. Because it will reconcile labour and capital, and solve the problem of trade-union strikes. Under free trade, in its entirety, strikes would die a natural death, for the conditions would then be present which would ensure the same end without their aid, viz., good trade, good profits, and good wages.

Fifth. Because it is now generally admitted that taxes on consumption of food tend to restrict the production of food, both for man and beast, and thereby diminish national wealth by operating in

restraint of trade.

Sixth. Because under the empire of freedom it is not in the power

of one class to oppress another.

Seventh. Because a system of import duties on foreign produce tends to excite a feeling of jealousy between nation and nation, and forces commerce into unnatural channels, the effect of which is to exhaust our mineral wealth by placing machinery artificially by unnatural means in the hands of foreign rivals, whereas under a system of entire free trade policy, our export trade would be principally that of textile fabrics, which are illimitable and inexhaustible, being our

<sup>\*</sup> That is an untaxed breakfast, dinner, and supper-table.

natural products in the beneficent scheme of Nature's universal division of labour; the home demand for minerals would exceed, or, at all events, keep pace with, the supply, and the foreign demand would be a natural one, and therefore a healthy demand.

Eighth. Because the past history of the last thirty years has demonstrated the fact that every step in the direction of a free trade

policy has resulted in nothing but good to the commonwealth.

Ninth. Because the customs and coastguards' institutions, operating, as they do, in restraint of commerce, are so far injurious to the interests of the commonwealth as though we had a blockading squadron at every port of the kingdom from a foreign enemy endeavouring to

starve us into submission.

Tenth. Because Mr. Gladstone, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, commenced a system of abolishing and reducing Customs and Excise Duties, by which policy he justly secured by unerring instinct the confidence and affections of the people, so much so that in 1868 they placed him on the very pinnacle of power: but, unhappily, from that moment he began to pursue an opposite and retrograde policy, which, in the nature of things, and by the same unerring instinct, resulted in his being hurled from power in 1874 as a just retribution for betraying the confidence of the people.

Eleventh. Because under the present system of taxing commodities there is a loss and cost to the country of £177,630,970 per annum, in order to realise a net revenue of £67,249,229, which added together make a total £244,800,199, whereas the total cost under the direct

system of taxation is estimated as follows, viz.:-

Net amount into the Exchequer... ... £67,249,229
Cost of collection, about 1½ per cent. ... ... 1,018,738

Total charge ... ... ... ... £68,257,967
(See "People's Blue Book," p. 169.)

Twelfth. Because, according to the official return for 1871, on two articles alone—beer and spirits—which cost to manufacture 17# millions, the people had to pay before it reached their mouths 98 millions,

illustrated as follows, viz. :-

Cost, 17½ millions to manufacture, add 17½ millions for fair profit, and 21½ millions for tax, total cost 57 millions, including the tax. Cost to consumer 98 millions, deduct cost, profit, and duty 57 millions, leaving 41 millions as a charge hidden in the price which never reaches the revenue, but finds its way into the pockets of a few millionaire distillers and brewers, wherewith to build gin palaces and demoralise the people.

If we glance at the results of taxation as now inflicted on the working classes, we shall see its injustice and absurdity, which, I am perfectly sure, would not be endured a day if the people saw the matter

in its true light. This has been caused by a variety of means, and, notably, a general lack of knowledge of the right principles of taxation, which is, unfortunately, considered a dry and uninteresting subject. It is, nevertheless, one of the vital principles of our social life and personal welfare. The "People's Blue Book" says:—"It is easy enough to see, under the present system—especially when no balance-sheet is given—how very large sums of public money may be misappropriated yearly without the smallest risk of detection. No efficient check can be provided until the revenue department furnish an accurate account of receipts and expenditure under each head, and a balance-sheet be given of the whole income and expenditure. This would reveal much which the public are entitled to have, but cannot now obtain." I am assured on good authority that the misappropriation may amount to millions of pounds sterling.

#### CHAPTER VII.

"The malt tax is not repealed, but converted into a beer tax, which, as respects the public interests, is like jumping out of the frying pan into the fire."

#### MALT TAX REPEAL.

A tax upon malt is like taxing our salt, It's a tax on a prime raw material; It taxes the cow and the man at the plough, Preparing for root-crop and cereal.

In approaching this subject, its length and breadth and importance appear to loom in a manner that really produces an astounding effect on the intelligent mind, and fills it with astonishment that the major millions of people of this great kingdom should have endured this malt-tax iniquity for so long, or should continue to do so for a single day. Its monstrous injustice to the millions of the working population is so flagrant that it outrages every sentiment of human nature, morality, religion, Christianity, and the laws of God. It is absolutely impossible to understand the psychology, or inherent quality of the minds of the governing classes in continuing this villainous tax, on the assumption that they are morally honest, and at the same time have a knowledge of the facts.

On the score of the necessity for the continuance of the tax, the party Governments of the kingdom alike have not an ounce of reason nor a grain of logic to justify its cruel imposition. There are underlying motives in both parties, which will not bear the light of truth. This I venture to state will be demonstrated by the facts and arguments which I am about to produce, and which, as I shall show, have been made fully known from time to time to both parties, under whose enormously expensive administration we have the honour, or misery, to exist. I regret to say that to millions of our fellow-

beings life is mere existence only, not living.

Perhaps I cannot do better than refer to the fact of a malt-tax deputation to Mr. Lowe, when Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1873, by way of entry into the special consideration of this odious tax. What I then said in commenting on that deputation (of which I was a humble individual) and on Mr. Lowe's remarks I here repeat, and regret that there is still a stern necessity for the reiteration, not only in condemnation of the Governments, Liberal and Conservative, but also to arouse the working classes generally, and the working-

men electors in particular, to a sense of the injustice they suffer, and the majesty of their power, if they knew how to use it, to achieve a thorough reform—a reform that would bring plenty, and peace, and comfort to their households.

Is not this a startling fact, viz., that upwards of 100 intelligent agriculturists, both owners and occupiers of land, assembled in Downing Street from all parts of the kingdom, to meet the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a petition to remove a tax which not only prevents them following their occupation to the best advantage as regards their own interests and economic science, but also robs the public i.e., all consumers of meat and beer, of forty-seven millions sterling annually, in order to put into the Treasury a paltry seven millions!

The arguments used were overwhelming, and indeed there was an evident impression made on the Chancellor of the Exchequer until one of the speakers suggested that in the event of a surplus not being sufficient to enable him (Mr. Lowe) to repeal the duty, he should transfer it from malt to beer. This was a signal of relief to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; from that moment he had a handle wherewith to justify him in denying the boon so energetically sought, and, in fact, it so nerved Mr. Lowe that he could bring to bear not quite but almost his usual power of persuading the people that black is white which resulted in the deputation slinking out like a lot of spaniels with their tails between their legs. after licking the hand that scourged them, begging hard at the hands of Mr. Lowe for future mercies. It would be useless to take up the time of the reader with recounting the thousands of reasons for the repeal of this odious tax; these are patent to all, even the commonest capacity, who may be in the habit of thinking about the matter at all. We will therefore confine our remarks to the criticism of Mr. Lowe's reply.

Mr. Lowe began by excusing himself for not having, in response to a request of the deputation two years ago, taken off the tax. He said, "I have been as good as my word as far as inquiry went," but he did not tell them that he had, or had not, read a pamphlet which was put into his hands by the Lord Provost of Glasgow, which contained a model budget, which, if adopted, would enable him to dispense not only with the malt tax, but all other taxes on industry, including the income tax, and yet raise seventy-eight millions a year without injury or injustice to any class of the community, but with great benefit to all. Here is "the loop-hole through which, without sacrificing the revenue, he could, to any extent, meet their wishes." We therefore hold that until Mr. Lowe has answered this pamphlet, he has not "considered the whole matters connected with the subject."

But suppose the granting of the boon did involve a sacrifice of revenue, what then? Is not "wealth ill-gotten sure to be ill-spent?" And the saying of the Right Hon. John Bright is still true—viz., "That

that Government which cannot rule this country with less than seventy millions does not deserve the confidence of the people."

Besides this, there is the ugly fact, which Mr. Lowe has not dared to combat—viz., that in the Government sacrificing this seven millions it virtually and practically enriches the people to the extent of forty-seven millions, for it leaves in their pockets this sum to fructify by setting the people free to produce the wealth from the soil, which is now prevented by the impediments to agriculture, manufacture, and general industry, which this tax imposes on all classes. If the Government wish to raise the revenue on just and righteous principles, let them give the people the perfect law of liberty, and they will then be able to create wealth, and see to its distribution under the natural laws of "supply and demand:" The difficulties of raising the revenue will then vanish, "good finances react favourably upon the public."

What was it that gained for Mr Gladstone that universal respect which lifted him into power? Simply the course he took when Chancellor of the Exchequer of following the example of the late Sir R. Peel, and the teaching of the late R. Cobden in abolishing that system of taxing commodities which has proved itself, in the minds of all right-thinking men, to be the cause and root of all the fiscal, social, moral, political, and economic evils that are now afflicting the body

politic.

To "put the tax on beer" would have been, as some of the hangerson to the deputation said, worse than taking a shilling out of one pocket and putting it into the other—it would have been taking a shilling

out of Lazarus's pocket and putting it into that of Dives.

Again, he said, "Of course you are not prepared to suggest a substitute." Why should the farmers and labourers, who pay taxes, and find the money wherewith the Ministry are paid some £5,000 per annum each for doing this duty, be expected, in addition to their own daily avocation, to think out these problems for which they pay Mr. Lowe and his colleagues so handsomely? The very question is indicative of lazy incompetence.

Mr. Lowe also said, "I am extremely sorry that the necessities of the State oblige us to tax the beer of the poor. My wish would be that the poor man should have his beer entirely free from taxation, and that, so far from promoting intemperance, would probably serve the

cause of temperance."

Again, he said, "I admit that the tax is a burden on the poor, and that they bear it almost exclusively." If Mr. Lowe wishes the mass of the people to believe him in his expression of sympathy, he is bound to answer the pamphlet spoken of above, which shows there is no necessity for the tax. Mr. Lowe himself furnishes one of the best illustrations for argument in favour of the repeal of the tax, when he says, "The producer looks to be reimbursed by the consumer, and if he is not he will very soon cease to produce the article because it will not pay him to do so. No man or farmer will invest his

money, knowing he will not receive it back with some sort of interest or profit."

The response from the farmers present was, "That is our case, we do refuse to invest in the culture of barley on that account." Therefore, the malt duty is proved positively to interfere with the increase of the produce of the soil. This is equivalent to stepping in between the tiller of the soil and the All-wise Ruler of the universe, and robbing them both.

Mr. Lowe said, "I believe the burden falls, I may say, almost exclusively upon the consumer, and in this case it falls upon the persons who drink the beer."

He also admits that the farmers are right in stating that the malt tax interferes with the rotation of crops and with the production of food for their cattle. What is the economic and logical result of these conclusions?

First.—As regards the effect it has on the interests and comforts of the people through taxing their national beverage. There are about eighteen millions of the people of the age of eighteen years and upwards in the United Kingdom; let us assume that a pint of beer per day is allowed as the average consumption of each person of that age, and that the malt tax robs them of one penny per pint, which is rather under than over the mark; what does this amount to in one year? It amounts to over twenty-seven millions sterling.

Second.—Regarding the loss to the country through the interference with the farmers' operations in rotation of crops, it has been proved by undoubted Parliamentary authority, that butchers' meat could be produced at least 2d. per lb. less cost if there were no malt tax. Well, the consumption of meat in the United Kingdom is upwards of £80,000,000 sterling at the wholesale price, and 2d. per lb. is about 25 per cent. on that, which comes to £20,000,000 sterling of a loss to the consumers.

Now, here is a clear loss of £47,000,000 sterling per annum on the article of malt alone, and this loss falls, according to Mr. Lowe's own admission, on the poor. We repeat that, for he told the farmers in the following words: "I admit that the tax is a burden on the poor, and that they bear it almost exclusively."

What would be the result supposing any commercial firm found that its financial manager had been managing matters in such a way as to make the realisation of £7,000,000 cost the firm £47,000,000?

—i.e., through wasteful management the firm had gained £7,000,000, but at such a cost as made it £47,000,000 poorer every year.

We should imagine there would be no alternative but instant dismissal or utter ruin to the firm. Again Mr. Lowe said, "It is hardly possible to put duty on a commodity such as malt without interfering with industry." Can there be a more cogent reason for repealing the malt tax? But Mr. Lowe's reply to the farmers is bristling with such-like reasons, and yet he persists in maintaining the tax. Again he said.

"It is a misfortune we cannot impose a tax which does not do mischief of some kind, and it is an evil we must submit to, for it would be a greater evil to have no taxes, no Government, and no security for property." In our own opinion, Governments ought to see "Their best security was in the well-being of the governed—that if property had its rights it also has its duties," and that they would best preserve the one by enforcing the due performance of the other. They should see that it is as essential for social order and the well-being of the people to protect the poor in the enjoyment of their inherent or natural rights, as it is to protect the rich in their artificial or acquired rights

of property.

They ought to see that it is a violation of the first principles of justice and policy, to impose taxes on food and raiment, or any other product of industry; that justice and policy equally require that the necessities of the State should be provided for out of acquired property, and not out of the daily toil which is producing that property. They ought to see that by taxing the daily labourer in his food and raiment they are committing the grossest injustice—that they are introducing elements of discord and disruption, the tendency of which must be to disturb and break up social order, by letting in fraud and violence in all the various forms of perjury and theft-adulterations and poisonings-smuggling and murder-all tending to demoralisation and disturbance, to the guilt and wretchedness of many, and the certain injury of all? We are fully convinced that right must prevail in the end, though thrones be overthrown, and Governments be broken up, and nations be destroyed, and people be scattered. We are of opinion that "the welfare of the people is the highest law."

We protest against the transference of the tax from malt to beer as

a wretched interchange of wrong for wrong.

Mr. Lowe said to the tenant-farmers, "They were under a delusion when they thought the repeal of the malt tax would be any great benefit to them. What would happen? Supposing you were able to turn the land to better account, and to make more of it, as I daresay you would, by growing more barley, what would be the effect? It would be that your tenancies would become more valuable; vou would have to pay more rent and be exactly where you are. benefit you would receive would immediately be absorbed by the owner of the land." Under a true Free Trade policy it would be out of the power of the landlord class to oppress the tenant or any other class, and if they will not grant perfect Free Trade, the time will come, if it has not already come, when the cry will be, "take the land from them as they have abused their trust," and give it back to the people. Could there be a better reason for repealing the tax, and shifting the burden from the poor to the shoulders of the rich landowners—the diminished cost of collection being two-thirds less by direct than by indirect process? This is a beautiful illustration and confirmation of the truth of the axiom

laid down by Turgot, "That no matter how the taxation of the country be levied (whether direct or indirect), the burden falls eventually on the land." And this being true, it follows that, inasmuch as the malt tax costs forty-seven millions sterling (as an indirect levy), in order to place into the revenue coffers seven millions, it costs the landowners more by forty millions than it would if they paid the tax directly out of their rents, and this is the "landlords' grievance," if only they were wise enough to see it in that light. Why not relieve them from this heavy burden, seeing that the benefits would result in the mutual good of all classes?

Mr. Lowe said:—"I don't scruple to say that whatever benefit would be derived from taking off the tax, beyond that derived by the consumer, would necessarily fall into the rent; this is why you are put forward to fight the landlord's battles." Our opinion nevertheless is, that such language is calculated to set class against class, farmers 'against landlords. The malt tax and others of a like nature are responsible for already having set the labourer against the farmer

class, and so the social anarchy is being developed.

Again, he told them "that so long as trade is free for letting farms, farmers will always be bidding against each other, and that will result in their rents being raised."\* But there is another aspect which he kept out of sight entirely, viz., that trade being free for farms it ought also to be free for the produce of farms in order to give fair play to the farmer and everyone else, including all classes. For instance, let us assume that the malt tax, tea tax, the sugar tax, the coffee, cocoa, and all other taxes on commodities were abolished, what would happen? Why the trade of the country would so expand as to find profitable employment for all those farmers and revenue and military officers, &c., who are now competing in the labour market to elbow each other out; then this United Kingdom of ours would be free indeed and would not need to spew out her people by hundreds of thousands every year to enrich our worst enemics with their productive labour; not only that, but, nationally speaking, our worst enemies must, in the nature of things and in self-defence, follow our example in untaxing God's good gifts, and so become our fast friends, and so, in the course of time, the necessity for standing armies be avoided all over the civilised world.

<sup>\*</sup>Suppose the rents to be raised (which is very logical and very right), it does not therefore follow that the farmers would be none the better off. Let us assume that by virtue of repealing the taxes on consumption, the profits of the farmer were enhanced by cheaper living and better cultivation—say to the extent of three pounds an acre—this would, by the natural laws of free trade, be divided in such a way as to give the benefits to all classes—say a pound an acre to the landowner, a pound an acre to the farmer, and a pound an acre to the people. The 10,000,000 acres which the malt tax throws out of cultivation in Ireland alone, would thus enrich ber to the extent of £30,000,000 annually.

### THE REPEAL OF THE MALT TAX.

On Tuesday afternoon the Chancellor of the Exchequer received a deputation from the committee of working-men who intended a fortnight since to wait upon him in a large procession, in company with a deputation from the Chambers of Agriculture, but whom he then declined to see. Their purpose then and on Tuesday was to urge upon the Government, through Mr. Lowe, the imperative necessity

for the repeal of the malt tax.

Mr. Briggs, of Richmond, in Surrey, expressed the views of those whom the deputation represented. They were deeply impressed, he said, with the conviction that this tax operated very injuriously, not only upon the working classes, but upon all other classes of society, and they therefore prayed the Government to make this question paramount over all other questions during the next session, with a view to the total and immediate repeal of the tax, as a first instalment towards that free breakfast, dinner, and supper-table for which the country had been craving for years past. They grounded this request upon the firm basis of justice, morality, and sound policy, as laid down by the most illustrious writers on the question of taxation, viz., Bastiat, Turgot, Charles Tennant, Adam Smith, Richard Cobden, and John Bright. This question afforded a broad basis for a great public movement, involving a great public good. In it there was nothing to set class against class; on the contrary, the object was to unite all classes in one common interest for the common good. Between 1840 and 1846 Parliament was engaged in serious deliberation upon the question of taxation, and the result was to the effect that it was fundamentally wrong to place a tax of any kind upon food or raiment or raw material appertaining thereto. In reply to Mr. Lowe, Mr. Briggs cited as his authority the speeches and discussions in Parliament and throughout the country.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer: I must say I do not read them so.

Mr. Briggs: Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright are good authorities.

Mr. Lowe: Why is it wrong to tax food? You come here to argue, not to assert.

Mr. Briggs: It is wrong, inasmuch as it taxes food in its way from the soil to the mouth. It interposes an impediment which is a sin against the highest laws.

Mr. Lowe: Which laws are they?

Mr. Briggs: Although we have the greatest respect for those in authority over us, if they go against the higher laws they must be the greatest sinners.

Mr. Lowe: What is the higher law that we go against?

Mr. Briggs: The law of nature and the law of God.

Mr. Lowe: Where do you find it?

Mr. Briggs: In putting an impediment in the way of feeding the poor, you grind the face of the poor.

Mr. Lowe: Then I understand that you are of opinion that the

poor ought not to be taxed at all. Is that so?

Mr. Briggs: No. I have given you a small budget which shows you how you can raise seventy-eight millions a year without taxing industry in any shape, and without treading on the toes of any interest,

or doing the slightest injury, or injustice, or immorality.

After a hint from Mr. Lowe to confine himself to the object of the interview, Mr. Briggs said they came not to argue in detail, but to lay down a broad principle. They looked to those in power, and who were heavily paid, to carry out the principle in detail. They represented no personal interest or local interest, and no class or local interest and would not go into detail about any paltry, pettifogging, tinkering, peddling, shifting it off one thing and putting it upon another. They left details to their servants, the House of Commons and the Government.

Mr. Lowe: I, as one of your servants, have a good many things to do, and do not sit here to hear general speeches such as you address to public meetings. I come to hear practical suggestions for the improvement of the system of taxation, and I must request you to confine yourself to such suggestions for the repeal of this tax as you may think

fit to do.

Mr. Briggs proceeded to argue that the malt tax was responsible for turning the British people into gin-drinkers, and the Scotch and Irish people into whisky-drinkers, and for wasting forty-seven millions of the people's hard-earned money in order to put seven millions into the Treasury. It had done this by preventing home-brewing, by preventing the retailers to the poor people from making a wholesome and cheap beverage, by destroying four-fifths of the malting-houses of the country, by throwing the malting process into the hands of a few gigantic brewers and distillers who now virtually hold it as a close monopoly created by this foul tax; thus rendering it impossible for the farmer to send a sack of barley to the neighbouring malt-kiln, and receive in exchange a sack of malt as of yore; and the peasant is deprived of the same privilege with his gleanings; and so both farmer and peasant are reduced to utter slavery for the benefit of a handful of monopolists. It likewise increased the price of butchers' meat 2d, a pound, or to the extent of twenty millions.

Mr. Lowe said he had seen this statement given as from the report of a House of Commons' committee upon the question of taxation in 1868; but, as a fact, there was nothing of the kind in the

report.

Mr. Briggs said, whether that were so or not, the principle to which they objected was rotten from an economical point of view. It prevented the cultivation in the best and most scientific way of the soil, and it created a famine in butchers' meat. The root crops and

barley could not be grown in the regular course of agriculture, and that

produced a scarcity of butchers' meat throughout the country.

Mr. Lowe, interrupting, said: I feel that it would be impossible for me to deal with the malt tax with a view to its repeal without interfering with some other persons and some other interests. It has not vet been shown to me how I could avoid doing so. I at once concede the fact that it would be desirable to repeal the malt tax, as there can be no doubt it does, to a certain extent, interfere with the interests of agriculture; but I want to know where I could find the £7,000,000 which that tax now produces to the revenue. What tax could I substitute in its place that would not be equally objectionable to some class or some interest? I admit there are many objections to the malt tax; and I have no desire to keep the tax longer than I find it absolutely necessary to do so. I admit that the malt tax is a tax pressing upon the poor; but I cannot for one moment admit that it is my duty to relieve the poor from all taxes, although I have gone a long way in that direction in removing the last vestige of the tax on corn, and reducing the duty on tea, sugar, and other articles of common consumption. The working classes have now a large share of political power; and I must not subscribe to the doctrine that it is my duty to relieve them from all taxation, while, by their representatives in Parliament, they will have the power of taxing the more wealthy classes. Such a policy would have a tendency to drive capital out of the country. from which the working-classes would be the greatest sufferers. hold out no promise whatever that, in the present exigencies of the country, I can afford to give up the malt tax, however much I might desire to do so, as I fail to see any substitute I could provide for it.

Mr. Briggs: Will you allow me, sir, to reply to one or two of the

remarks you have just made.

Mr. Lowe: Certainly not. I must decline to enter into any further discussion.

Mr. Briggs would have pointed out that the capital of the country was already leaving the country in the shape of human labour to the tune of £400,000,000 annually.

The deputation then retired, and the following memorial was put

into Mr. Lowe's hands :-

Sir,—Although we ostensibly come before you as a deputation from the working-classes, we are deeply impressed with the idea that the interests of all classes are alike affected injuriously by the operation, not only of the malt tax, but of all taxes on commodities.

Mr. Bright, on October 10th, 1859, wrote to an association of small householders in Birmingham as follows:—"There is something essentially mean and singularly cruel in the manner in which the taxation of this country has been, and is still levied. Our rich class is the richest in Europe; the administration of the country is in its laands, and the greater proportion of the heaviest taxation in the world

is thrown upon the class possessing no property but its labour and its wages, than is the case in any other country." We are of opinion that the question of taxation of the country is a question affording the broadest base for a great public movement, involving a great public good; in it there is nothing to set class against class, but quite the contrary. The object is, to unite all classes in one common interest,

for their common good.

During the period of 1840 to 1846 the people generally, and Parliament particularly, were engaged in serious deliberation on the question of taxation, at the end of which time the result of such deliberation was to the effect that it was fundamentally wrong to put a tax of any kind upon food or raiment, or any raw material appertaining thereto, and the first instalment to this was the partial repeal of the Corn tax; and this policy has been so far acted upon subsequently as to remove the tax entirely from the latter; but unfortunately for the country, as regards the former (food), the work was only half done. We hold that it is wrong to tax raiment; and if so, doubly wrong to tax food.

As evidence of the soundness of this view, we venture respectfully to draw your attention to the gigantic strides the prosperity of the country made under this partial reform of our fiscal system during the period between 1846 and 1860. This period may be specially noted as being one during which a minimum of trades-union strikes occurred. At the latter date, however, that prosperity was brought to a stand by the stoppage of the supply of cotton—the mainspring of our manufacturing industry. Therefore, inasmuch as a partial reform of the fiscal system had such a beneficial effect upon the industry of the country, we deem it absolutely suicidal to delay the completion of so good a work, and we therefore pray that the Government proceed at once to initiate measures for the abolition of all Custom and Excise duties.

Immediately after the Report of this malt-tax deputation appeared in the public papers a lot of strictures were inflicted on me in no measured terms, and I was for some time unable to reply in the manner I desired, because it was absolutely necessary for me to hunt up the Parliamentary Report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the operation of the malt tax of the 10th of July, 1868, in order to clear up the point of dispute as regards its effects on the production of butchers? meat and dairy produce generally.

In a few days I sent the following letter to the Times, which appeared in due course as a vindication of my conduct before the

Chancellor of the Exchequer :-

Sir,—Mr. Lowe makes a great point in justification of his policy in keeping on the tax, that there is no such item in the report as to warrant us in stating that, "but for the malt tax, butchers' meat could be produced at least 2d. per lb. less price throughout the United Kingdom." His words are—"As a fact, there is nothing of the kind in the Report."

Now, I beg respectfully to refer the Right Hon. Gentleman to the appendix of the Report, where he will find (page 175) a paper forwarded to the Committee by Mr. John Claydon, headed—"Tabular Statement of the Result of Feeding Fourteen Bullocks and Nine Bullocks respectively at Wendon Hall, near Saffron Walden, commencing on June 30, 1865, and terminating December 30, 1865:—

The 14 bullocks fed in the usual way ceach bullock Cost to begin with per head on June 30		an ave		£16		6 0
Total cost each Dec. 30, sold for £413 10s., or each	···	•••	···	£36	1 10	
Showing loss per head	•••	•••		£6	IO	9
Second Period-	-4 weel	KS.				
The nine bullocks fed upon non-dried of half a peck of raw barley, daily Straw chaff, 6d.; grass, 3s. 6d	malt, 1	he pro	duce 	£°		
Total			•••	£o	7	6
Third Period—	9 week	S <b>.</b>				
And for the last nine weeks, non-dried of one peck of raw barley, daily, 14 l Straw chaff	b	•••		£°	7 0	o 6
Total The first period, 13 weeks, gras		 ód. per	 week	~	7	6
The nine bullocks—average cost of each with on June 30 Cost per head in feeding	•••	•••	egin 	£15	o 16	
Total cost per head Sold for £235, or at the rate of			•••	£22 26		
Showing a profit per head of	•••		•••	£3	6	2
The loss upon the 14 bullocks fed upo the usual way was, per head The gain upon the nine bullocks fed up was, per head	on non	-dried	 malt		10 6	9
Balance in favour of the nine malt-fed	bullock	s per l	nead	£9	ıģ	I 1

Now, in order to find out what per lb. this loss amounts to, we have only to take the average weight of a bullock at say 1,157 lb., and assuming the loss to be 2d. per lb., this sum corresponds with the above balance of £9 16s. 11d.; thus giving an illustration proved by actual experience that the Malt Tax is responsible for adding to the cost of meat throughout the United Kingdom at least 2d. per lb., and thus creating an artificial famine by legal process in the face of a beneficent Providence, frustrating alike the industrial efforts of man, and Heaven's good and gratuitous gifts, and the natural laws of supply and demand.

Again, page iv., Section 2, in the Report, the Commissioners say:—
"Your Committee proceeded to examine several agriculturists of
great practical experience, taken respectively from all parts of the
country, whose opinions generally concur to the effect that the Malt
Tax interferes with the due rotation of crops, by causing wheat to be
sown where barley would otherwise be sown; that it causes the
labouring classes to consume an unwholesome kind of beer; that it
prevents the farmers giving to the labourers wholesome home-brewed
beer," &c.

Again, Section 3:—

"That the tax compels the maltster to use more capital in his trade by at least 50 per cent."

Again, Section 7:-

"Elias Amos says he brews three times a year in his cottage, and would do so oftener if malt were cheaper; he and his family would use beer instead of tea, as they could do more work on it; that publichouse beer is not so wholesome."

Again, Section 8:-

"That, taking the price of barley at 31s. a quarter, the tax, when paid by the maltster, is 70 per cent.; the person who buys malt and brews beer from it pays a tax of 100 per cent.; and the person who buys beer from a public-house by retail pays a tax of 140 per cent. Your Committee are of opinion that the principle on which this calculation is based is correct, and that the consumer of beer pays a very much heavier tax than goes into the Exchequer."

Again, Section 11:

"Your Committee consider that the result of the evidence taken by them is that the Malt Tax prevents the farmer from cultivating his land to the greatest advantage; that it obstructs him in the use of a valuable article of food for cattle; that, by making it necessary to employ a large additional amount of capital in the important trade of malting and brewing, it has created and tends to foster two large monopolies; and that, by materially increasing the price of beer, it encourages adulteration, and prevents to a great extent the habit of brewing among the labouring people."

All the above has been proved by practical brewers, and, further, it has been tested and proved thousands of times that, but for the Malt

Duty, beer of the strength of four barrels to the quarter of malt can be sold at \( \frac{1}{2}d \), per pint by the brewer, and 1d, per pint by the retailer,

and give to them both 100 per cent. profit.

I myself, who have been a wholesale brewer, can testify to the truth of this by practical experience. In the face of these facts, why should the five millions of agricultural and manufacturing families be condemned to pay to a handful of men, huge brewers and maltsters, £27,000,000, in order to put into the Treasury a paltry £7,000,000? And why should the consumers (and those who would consume if they could get them) of beef and mutton be condemned to pay more by £20,000,000 per annum than they would have to do were there no Malt Tax?

If the Malt Tax and ail other taxes on commodities and industrial incomes were repealed, I am ready to pledge my life that the country in a very short time would save as much by the transaction as would pay off the National Debt, say, in about ten years.

I would also crave your assistance in setting myself right with Mr.

Lowe as regards the taxation of the working classes.

He said, "Then I understand that you are of opinion that the poor ought not to be taxed at all. Is that so?" My reply was a decided "No." I have given you a model budget for raising the revenue, which shows you how to raise £78,000,000 without doing an injustice to any class, and that budget will let none escape taxation who live under a roof, and yet it does not levy a tax on consumption or profits of trade, agriculture, or manufacture as such. It is as follows:—

Property Tax	c on 1	the ann	ual val	ue of	all	realised	pro-	
perty, 10 p Personal or	er cen	it		from	7.	to "(*o	nor	£36,061,525
Personal or	HOUS	emoraer	s iax,	11 0111	な」	10 £10	her	, ,
house	• • • •		• • •	•••	•••	•••	•••	34,500,000
Post Office	•••					• • • •		4,671,230
Telegraph Se	ervice	(estima	ted)	•••	•••	•••		100,761
Crown Land	s	• • • •	•••	• • •	• • •	•••	• • •	447,723
Miscellaneou	ıs	•••	•••	•••	•••	•••	•••	3,205,253
Tota	al Rev	enu <b>e</b>				***		£,78,986,492

It is for Mr. Lowe to attack this budget if it be unsound, because this is our "substitute," and if not unsound it is for him to say why

he does not adopt it.

It is not a question of "saving drinkers of malt liquors from contributing to the necessities of the State;" it is not a question of belief in the use of strong drink (for wholesome table-beer is not strong drink), and if it were why should the Government dirty its hands by partaking of the spoil that results from vice and wickedness? Barley has been proved by the evidence before the Committee of Inquiry to be not only useless but absolutely hurtful to cattle if unmalted. This truth is meant to apply

to a certain class who come under the category of drunkards—about two out of every hundred of the population. It is quite true that "for every pint of malt liquor drunk with a show of reason, at least another pint is drunk for no other reason than to gratify an acquired and morbid taste," under the present state of things, since the monopoly created by the malt tax and licensing systems result in brewing and adulterating the beverage with that intent. But, be this as it may, statistics show that only 2 out of every 100 are the culprits, and why should the 98 pay the penalty for the vicious 2?

It is also true that the publican and cottager have long since given up brewing, and for the best of all reasons—they cannot compete with the gigantic capitalists whom the law protects at their expense; but the question is that the law shall not interfere with the liberty of those who choose to do so. "Nature has made us helpmates of one another,"

but human laws may step in to prevent us.\*

I hold that this was conclusive as against Mr. Lowe's hasty statements, and a full confirmation of what I had advanced, and the working bees in the hive of humanity cannot too much investigate this subject, for their interests in a special degree, which, despite all that the "Upper Ten Thousand," or their agents, say to the contrary, are the real and substantial interests of the kingdom. They make the Commonwealth:

Beer is the national and favourite beverage of the working-man; with him it is nearly a necessary of life, if not quite so. It is, beyond doubt, the only approach to a luxury that he is permitted to enjoy. Let us see how the malt tax affects the agricultural labourer. His means are, indeed, limited, but small as his income is, he occasionally allots some portion of it to the purchase of malt or beer. portion, I may safely assert, is his surplus, and I will further venture to say that nine-tenths of such surplus goes for beer, and still the quantity thus procured is far below that which he requires to supply and stimulate his muscular powers, the call upon the labourer being upon his physical and not upon his mental exertions. I have long taken a great interest in the agricultural labourer, and have made many inquiries as to the quantity of malt purchased by them during the year. In this county (Suffolk), of which I am specially considering, home-brewing is universal with them. From these inquiries I believe that something like four bushels yearly are used by good, steady, married labourers in constant employment. This estimate does not include what is supplied them by their employers during harvest. Assuming that these four bushels are brewed into eighty gallons or 640 pints of beer, this has to be distributed over fifty-two weeks, less six, when he consumes the harvest malt, as it is called.

<sup>•</sup> This was substantially my reply to an article in the Times of the 30th of January, 1873, on my speech to Mr. Lowe, and I submit that it was and is a complete vindication.

There will, therefore, be 640 pints for 322 days, which will allow just under two pints a day for the husband, wife, and say four children. Apportion that quantity over only three meals daily amongst six persons, and will anyone say that such a homeopathic dose, if I may so call it, is near what we should wish them to be able to command. Remember the call is upon the man's muscles, the wife is fully employed rearing and providing for the children! the food is poor, no wine at the reduced duty, and little animal food. And I think you will agree with me that the quantity of beer which the agricultural labour can now procure is totally inadequate to his deserts or his wants. Let us see how the repeal of the tax would benefit this family, who are consuming yearly 640 pints of beer at the cost of—

Four bu	shels	of malt	at 8s.	6d.					~		α <b>.</b>
Four po	unds	of hops	•••	•••							
Firing	•••	•••	• • •		• • •	• • •	•••	• • •	0	I	0
										_	_
									£2	I	0

I have here given the cost of the beer to the labourer who brews at home. The labour of brewing is usually done by the wife, and virtually costs nothing, the grains and yeast amply repays all expenses; but not wishing to overstate the case, I have allowed one shilling for firing. Were the duty repealed, the case would be—

			£ s. d.
Nearly six bushels of malt at 5s., 4s. perhaps			I 10 O
Six pounds of hops at 1s. 6d	• • • •		090
Firing	•••	•••	016
			£2 0 6

or 960 pints of beer instead of 640. Surely this addition of 320 pints of home-brewed beer to such a household would be a very great benefit.

Let us now consider the case of a more needy or less provident labourer, who rarely or ever can command sufficient money to purchase mait. The man's craving is still for beer, and beer he will occasionally have. With such, the malt tax bears still harder than with those first considered. He is drawn to the public-house where he has to pay two-pence per pint for beer. I will not call it adulterated, because I do not know that it is so; but this I do know, that such beer is unsatisfying and very different to any that I have ever been able to brew. I will now presume that this description of labourer spends half the amount yearly for beer that the first-mentioned one does; this will be 20s. 6d., for which he procures 123 pints, while the other for the same sum gets 320. Now, it may be that although this man cannot command

&s. 6d. at any one time to purchase one bushel of malt, it is quite possible that he can occasionally spare 5s. for such purpose. Repeal the tax, and good malt will then be sold at that sum. Beyond doubt the want of beer at home draws the labourer to the public-house; although I have been told that it is the love of society that takes him there. Why, it is a common and every-day sight to those who reside near a public-house to see men go there during the hour allowed for dinner and not remain there five minutes; nothing but feeling a deep want of beer would do this; the labourer who has beer at home does not leave his place of work, and why? Because he brings his bottle of beer with him. Repeal the malt tax, encourage the working classes to brew at home, and where this is not possible reduce the price of beer; by this means many that can now only buy in the smallest quantities will then be induced to purchase it direct from the brewer in four-and-a-half or nine-gallon casks; you will thus remove the first cause that tempts the poor man to the public-house, which eventually ruins him. I am not sanguine enough to suppose that the repeal of the tax will reclaim drunkards, but I firmly believe that it would greatly limit the creation of them.

All this applies with equal force and bearing on the artisans and the better paid working-men. They have all cause to complain of the great amount of taxation which they pay in the malt tax, of which a

comparatively small portion goes into the public exchequer.

The following letter of Mr. A. K. Johnston's is so excellent in itself, and bears so directly on this subject, that I am constrained to give it other record than that of the *Ipswich Journal*, in which it appeared in 1866. It is equally true at the present time:—

## "THE MALT TAX.

# "To the Editor of the Ipswich Journal.

"Sir,—Based on eighteen years' official experience in China, I endeavoured to show at the Halesworth Anti-Malt-tax meeting when I moved the second resolution of the day, 'that three hundred and sixty millions of most industrious, thrifty, and above all, remarkably soberpeople in China, were allowed to do what they liked with the produce of their soil. They might convert it into raiment, or food, or drink, at their option, quite unrestricted by law. That they do manufacture a great amount of wine, spirits, and an article not very unlike malt liquor, without its leading to intemperance, although they might intoxicate themselves at less cost than that of a pint of beer in this country. The inference to be drawn is, that the virtues I describe the Chineseto possess, show that the absence of restrictions on making intoxicating liquors is the cause of their great sobriety, unsurpassed by any other nation. This cannot be accounted for by their religion, for they are pagans and idolaters, all but the higher classes, who have even no word in their language to express the Supreme Being. Neither can it

be their climate, for one extreme of the empire lies beneath the tropics, and the other borders on Siberia, thus comprising nearly every climate under the sun.'

"I went on to say I thought that those who advocated temperance and total abstinence, whom I designated the philanthropic and the charitable, would, did they investigate these subjects more closely, find out another and more effectual way of attaining their ends than by legislative restrictions, or by a malt tax; and they would discover that the malt tax produced amongst the labourers, particularly the farm labourers of England, that very intemperance we unfortunately sometimes find, which the judges and magistrates of the land know to be the cause of many of their crimes. Should medical men be consulted, they would say that the moderate use of wholesome beer, unpoisoned by adulteration, would inevitably be attended with improved health to the hard-working labourer. Why should not like causes produce in England similar effects to those which they do in a nation comprising nearly a third of the world's population? Why not let the British farm-labourer do what he likes with the articles he so greatly contributes to produce? Why may he not malt the crop he has tilled? Why not prepare it by domestic cookery into that sort of barley-soup we call beer? Remove this cruel malt tax, and we should see the farm-labourer in most cases stopping at home to rest after the fatigues of the day, and enjoying his hard-earned wages in common with his wife and family. In place of resorting to ditches and ponds for his beverage, these sons of the soil would be able to partake of a draught of their own brewed beer with their meals, at a time when it would add to their heartiness, and fit them for renewed toil. Their system would not be reduced to debility by a combination of taxes and low wages. They would be able to render a full day's labour for a full day's hire. We should see them improved altogether in condition, and, more important still-in mind; less frequently the victim of sickness, and able to rally when afflicted with it.

"It has been asserted that beer is the poor man's luxury, and that it is sound policy to raise your revenue out of luxuries rather than out of the necessities of life; therefore, that beer should be taxed as well If by the word 'poor man' we are to understand as wine and spirits. the labourer of the soil, I deny the truth of this position in toto. Beer is no luxury to him, poor fellow! He is denied the privilege of preparing it; and if anyone will take the pains to make a house-to-house investigation, he will find the farm labourer rarely able even to drink such beer as he can get at the public-house, and certainly no other. The first is too dear, and the last not to he procured. Now and then, say perhaps a dozen times in the year, he may manage to scrape together a few pence (to the disadvantage of the rest of his family, who never share it), and then to indulge at the pot-house on heady, adulterated beer, which gets him into scrapes, and not unfrequently causes the forfeit of his daily bread, or brings him before the magistrate for some offence, avoided if allowed to brew at home. Under these circumstances, beer is no luxury, but a dangerous rarity, the use of which not understanding, he abuses. It should, in fact, be no luxury, more than the barley broth is to the labourer in Scotland, but a necessity of life—a part of his food, cooked in his own house, when its frequency would preclude his abusing it any more than he at present abuses the other articles of his diet.

"Is it well, or reasonable, or moral—in one word, is it wise, to sow vice by standing between the humble tiller of the soil and his right,

and to pervert the masses to crime?

"Further, regarding the total or partial abolition of the Malt tax, I stated that Mr. Gladstone, in 1853, remitted a duty of upwards of one million on soap, because (to use his own words) 'This is an article of taxation of which it is most necessary both to the comfort and to the health of the people,' and because this is an article on which the pressure of the tax is so severe, that, notwithstanding the general wisdom with which your Excise laws are administered, and, notwithstanding the drawback you grant on exportation, your productive power is crippled by the tax.

"I have already endeavoured to show that Mr. Gladstone's first reason applies more forcibly, if possible, to the remission of the tax on malt than it does to that on soap, and hence the Malt tax is most in-

jurious to the comfort and health of the people.

"As regards the productive power of the tax being crippled by the tax itself (if this be Mr. Gladstone's meaning), I stated the consumption of the whole of England was five bushels per head when the malt duty was four shillings a quarter, and that since 1858, when the duty was put at £1 1s. 8d. (over five times what it was in 1750), the consumption has been less by three bushels per head. Did not the higher rates of £1 1s. 8d. cripple the productive power of the tax, the revenue derived from it (taking the present population of England at the low estimate of 20,000,000 and the consumption per head at five bushels) would not be £5,500,000 per annum, but above £12,900,000. In 1750, when the consumption was five bushels per head, the value of malt for cattlefeeding was not understood, as it is now by many of our best farmers and graziers. All this considered, there can be little doubt, that with a low duty, the consumption of malt would rapidly increase as an article used in making beer, without taking into calculation any allowance for the duty on the malt used in the manufacture of meat, to which at the present price of meat, it would be hard to find a limit. "I am Sir,

"Your odedient servant,
"A. K. JOHNSTON

"The Grove, Yoxford,
"17th January, 1866."

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### TREATIES OF COMMERCE.

- "THE productive power of society is synonymous with its wealth.
- "The liberty to work has an immense influence upon the progress of industry and the production of wealth. It is impossible for a nation to develop its wealth if it be deprived of its liberty, and the more it possesses it the more rapidly and better will be its progress in this direction."—

  M. MICHEL CHEVALIER.
  - "Exchange is political economy; it is society itself, for it is impossible to conceive society as existing without exchange, or exchange without society. Nay, we should not even have individuals: to man isolation is death. But then, if we cannot live out of society, the conclusion is that the social state is his natural state.
  - "Whatever tends to enlarge the stock of necessaries and comforts distributable amongst the human family is a benefit and a blessing. Whatever tends to contract it is a scourge and a crime, from which all suffer; and it is on the poor that the suffering weighs most heavily."

TREATY of commerce is a mere sectional form of a large general subject-that of human industry, from which is derived all the wealth of the world. As the acquisition of wealth, commonly called riches, is unquestionably one of the mainsprings of life and enterprise, and not unreasonably so, seeing that their possession gives the means and power, if not always the capacity, to utilise them for the achievement of personal and domestic happiness, it not unfrequently happens that the desire of wealth blinds those who pursue it, too often as a sort of passion, so that their lives are spent, or wasted, grasping at the means to an end which they never reach—the happiness of rest, the sweets of repose after toil, the present enjoyment of human good. Solomon, that youthfully wise but foolish old king, said, "He that hasteth to be rich shall not be innocent;" and in these days of so-called enlightenment, of bubble companies, of commercial swindles, of stock-jobbing rascalities, and though last not least, the betting-rings just now being investigated in our law courts, we have great and sore proofs of the truth of that moral, commercial, and personal utterance.

If we are ever to escape from this moral and social anarchy, it will

be through the divine influence of the perfect law of liberty in relation to commerce.

Of the same sectional and conventional character are all treaties of commerce to the mighty millions in the hives of human industry. They are frauds perpetrated by monopolists, by chartered companies, and by governments, under the specious pretence of regulating that which requires no regulation from without; but which the people under freedom of commerce are fully competent to manage for themselves, and which are never touched by governments without doing injustice to the millions, muddling the normal condition of trade, and often murdering industry under the guidance of treachery, called by the fine name of diplomacy; that seeks to circumvent others by cunning, for class purposes.

Diplomacy is always a policy of compromises, which violates the grand and fundamental principle of true political economy. I have found by sad experience that if we had held to this principle when we repealed the Corn Laws, we should not have had the vested interests which have sprung up this last quarter of a century, against which we have now to contend, and which are so many branches developed from the upas tree of Customs and Excise, that blasts our national industry.

wealth, and happiness.

"There was a remarkable letter in the Times of Monday last from Hugh Mason, contrasting the advantages of the cotton manufacturers of France with those enjoyed by the same class in Great Britain. Mr. Mason, who ought to be an authority, commences by saying :- 'There is one practical side of the Anglo-French Treaty of Commerce which I think has not had its fair share of attention.' We perused his letter with the utmost interest, expecting to find some solution of the Free Trade problem, but we were doomed to disappointment. The same impression of the *Times* contained a leader upon this letter, giving Mr. Mason a severe 'Phillipping,' such as he deserved. The writer says (and we concur) that Mr. Mason's premises are of a doubtful character, and that there is a want of agreement between his premises and his conclusions, and that his letter rests the case on a false issue; and, further, that if we are to induce France to adopt Free-Trade principles, it must be by arguments precisely the reverse of those which Mr. Mason has pressed into his service. The Times very properly goes on to say, 'Our claim is that we can supply France with some kinds of cotton goods at a much lower price than she at present pays for them. Our address as Free Traders is to the French consumers (the whole people), not to the French manufacturers. as we will we shall never induce the latter to listen to us.' very good so far, but the Times afterwards begins to lead us on a false scent, and says, 'It is, after all, the French Government whom it is important for us to persuade, and not the manufacturer.' Now, it is our purpose to show that our duty as Free Traders ought not to lead us to address our complaint to either of the above parties, but that we ought first to address ourselves to our own Government in order to make it grant the primary condition of success before going into an international court of public opinion. The primary step is to sweep away our Custom House system altogether—we shall make use of some of Mr. Mason's statistics to establish our proof—and we contend this is the only 'practical side which has not had its fair share of attention.' The following tabulated statement of a week's wages shows (especially when coupled with the startling fact that the French worker has to work sixty-six hours for his low wages, whilst the English worker only works fifty-six hours for his week's wages, some 50 per cent. higher than his French brother-labourers receive), that we have to set our own house in order before we attempt to dictate to our neighbours across the Channel, or even presume to suggest to them the acceptance of Free Trade in its complete development:—

### "WEEKLY WAGES.

			France.	England.
Men in Cotton-room		• • • •	13s.	24s.
Grinders and Strippers		•••	Ios.	24s.
Under Carders		•••	245.	30s.
Can Tenters		•••	\ IIS.	16s.
Drawing-frame Tenters	• • •		13S.	16s.
Self-acting Minders		•••	23s. 9d	. 34s.
Roller Coverers	• • •	•••	19s.	30s.

The English factory works fifty-six hours a week, or 2,912 hours a year; the French factory works sixty-six hours a week, or 3,432 hours a year. Mr. Mason goes on to complain of the dead weight with which the English spinner is handicapped by high-priced labour. The French pay the thirty minders £1,852 for working 3,432 hours, and the English pay £3,125 for the same number of hours. This is in one department of labour only. Then, again, French manufacturers have the natural advantage of transit, which amounts to about 15 per cent. in their favour; thus showing in wages 50 per cent., and in transit 15 per cent., or a total of 65 per cent. advantage over the English manufacturer. In addition to this, there is a further difference to the disadvantage of the English in the 520 extra hours which the French have in the course of the year. It may be said that we enjoy a superiority in our coal supply, but that is a mere trifle compared with the above.

"But what is the remedy for this state of things? Mr. Mason can suggest nothing better than the choice of one of the two following alternatives, viz., either that the English manufacturers should go to France with their capital, or that they should bring the French artisans over to England. We would suggest that there is a more excellent way to solve the problem. Let us 'take the beam out of our own eye, and then we shall see more clearly to take the mote out of our

brother's eye.' By our fiscal system, we tax the brickmaker's tea, coffee, beer, and tobacco, and they, finding living come dearer and dearer, strike for higher wages. The strike begets a lock-out; there are consequently no bricks made the first season, consequently those essential building materials become double in price next season. The same takes place in all the other branches of industry, and what is the result? That the cotton operatives find that they have double rents to pay, higher prices for bread, meat, milk, butter, and other articles of daily consumption. The agricultural labourer and the farmer, in their turn, feel that all the articles they have to buy, if not taxed by Government, are taxed through the enhanced prices paid by the respective producers, and all this in consequence of the Government

tax on a few articles of general consumption.

"We remember the time when the fathers of the present generation of factory owners would have spoken out holdly, and would have said. We have been weighted long enough with this millstone round our necks. We will pay our taxes direct, and save money by it for all classes alike, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer down to the meanest in the land. We have had enough of playing at beggar-myneighbour, for we find it a losing game for all except a few large brewers and distillers. These old-fashioned men of the Manchester school would have subscribed, each according to his faith and means, as their fathers did when they subscribed to the £100,000 guarantee fund for agitating that the first half of the incubus might be removed. Some of them subscribed £1,000, some £500, some £100, and some £,50. Not so their sons, who could, in some instances, with more ease subscribe ten times the amount out of the wealth which would never have been theirs but for the first half of Free Trade which their fathers obtained by determined agitation, and bequeathed to them as a rich legacy, waiting for further development. Have they been so blinded by this great wealth as to fail to see that by repealing the customs and excise they would relieve themselves from that 'dead-weight,' that they would raise the moral standard of themselves and their workpeople, that the wages they pay would have greater purchasing power for all useful things, that the home trade would at once be expanded. and very soon be three times greater both in textile fabrics and in iron manufactures?

"Take, for example, the consumption in alcoholic liquors; it is estimated at £4.7s. 8d. per head of the population. But were direct taxation adopted, and the Excise duty removed from these articles of consumption, only about half the amount of money would be required to yield the same purchasing power, while the balance amounting to about £50,000,000, would be liberated, and become available for the purchase of home and foreign products. The effect of this improved economy on our trade it is impossible to estimate. For instance, we should have escaped the hostile deferential duty just now inflicted upon our commerce by Spain as a retaliative measure; but, un-

doubtedly, there would be a large increase of capital and labour; trade would receive a powerful impetus; and pauperism and crime would be diminished with the removal of temptation. Where is now the spirit of the late Richard Cobden, of John Bright, as he was in his early days, of Sir Thomas Potter, of John Brooke, of Mark Phillips? Has that spirit entirely ceased to animate their sons and successors, and are we to conclude that their successors are all demoralised and degenerated?"

I have already expressed my conviction that these treaties formed by diplomacy are very questionable things, and the same opinion was uttered by Mr. Ripley, of the deputation to Earl Derby, as will appear in the following letter which I addressed to that nobleman:—

" March 22nd, 1877.

## "ANGLO-FRENCH TREATY.

"To the Right Hon. Earl Derby, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

"My Lord,—I have been reading an account, reported in this day's Standard, of a deputation having waited upon your Lordship yesterday from the Associated Chamber of Commerce. It may seem like presumption on my part, a humble citizen of this great country, to address your Lordship on this grave question; but it appears to me, after long and close observation, that the time has arrived when our statesmen must take a stand upon sound economic principles in com-

mercial legislation, or the nation will fall.

"The difficulties in the way of coming to an agreement between our manufacturers and those of France, or any other nation, should point out to your Lordship, that commercial treaties brought about by diplomatic arrangement have something within them inherently unsound, and your Lordship half hinted to the deputation what was the true and unalloyed metal when you put the question thus:—'Then if I understand you rightly, putting a hypothetical case, if you cannot get a treaty more favourable than the present, rather than the our hands you would go on without any treaty at all?' This is the most enlightened view to take of it, and I was glad to find Mr. Ripley answered in the affirmative. But I regret to have to admit that your Lordship has made a very important mistake in saying that we have given beforehand what we have to give.

"Your Lordship must have forgotten the duty of 10s. per gallon upon French brandy, and the wine duty, and I am not sure that the tobacco tax affects France; but be that as it may, and looking the question in the face as a great economic principle, and not a question of diplomacy, it is our duty, if we wish to remain the leading nation of the world, to adopt Free Trade, pure and simple, without regard to the action of other countries. This, as you say very truly, 'is, from an administrative and economical point of view, the strength

of our position.' If we decline to join the manufacturers of France and England in their combination to rob the people on both sides the water, we 'heap coals of fire upon their heads;' for if they take a right view of their own interest they will find that 'honesty is the best policy' after all. I regret to use the word robbery, but I am using it advisedly, for all our great (not living) economists have proved that to levy a tax on the exchange of articles of commerce is, an operation which tends to rob the bulk of the people for the sole benefit of a few, under the pretence of making the said bulk pay their debt to the State. This is the same, no matter whether the tax be for Protection purposes

or for revenue only.

"If the French people be so utterly steeped in ignorance and slavery as to tolerate a Protection policy, after the experience of a comparatively Free Trade policy since 1860, they are greatly to be pitied. But it does not follow that we are to falter in our steps towards the true, righteous, and unadulterated policy of Free Trade; we have only to be consistent and logical in dealing with this question. When we have swept away those two monstrous wrongs, Customs and Excise, France and all other civilised nations will soon follow our example, but not till then. It is not enough to point out how much we have already done in that direction; justice, morality, and sound policy bid us cleanse our hands entirely before we can command the ear of the civilised world to our complaints about their action in the matter.

"If our manufacturers would go in for untaxing the working people in their beer and tobacco, and make them pay their just debt to the State, and no more than their just proportion, in the same way as they pay their rent to their landlord, they would soon find trade at home expand to such dimensions as to virtually make them independent of the French trade. If France protects herself from sellers, she

deprives herself of buyers.

"If your Lordship would pluck up moral courage enough to untax their tea, and convert the opium lands of India into food-producing lands, what a revolution for good would follow: famine and false finance would die a natural death together, the Chinese population of 400,000,000 would take our iron ware and calico in exchange for pottery, tea, silk, and a thousand other articles of vertu for which they are so famous. Our Brasseys, our Cottons, our Brogdens, our Stevensons, &c., &c., would soon find a way out of the engineering and physical difficulties which interpose between our Indian possessions and China. What a stimulus would be given to our coal and iron industries when this problem is solved of making a network of railways and ship canals through India and China? Then, and not till then, they would be good and remunerative speculations, giving legitimate profit to all concerned, and a field opened for capital and labour sufficient to satisfy the enterprise of all the manufacturers of the civilised world.

"Mr. Mulholland, alluding to the task before them, said, 'They would look at it as political men, dealing with what was possible, and not what was desirable. They must secure the best they could in the interest and the welfare of the trade and industries of England.' Now what does this vague language mean? The French manufacturers will read this and interpret it as a challenge, and will take up the gauntlet from their point of view. I regret to say that in the absence of any elaborate explanation of this speech, short as it is, we cannot come toany other conclusion than that Mr. Mulholland, is a very dangerousnegotiator, and will prove himself to be a round peg in a square hole. Be just and fear not the consequences; we then shall find that what is-'desirable' will also be 'possible.' Treaties of commerce are incompatible with a state of Free Trade, for commercial treaties imply that . there are fiscal obstructions to be removed. Free Trade means that there are none of these mountains and mud-ruts to overcome. Therefore, I appeal to your Lordship's better judgment, in the interests and welfare, not only of the trades and industries of England, but of theinterests and welfare of the whole people of England, France, and thewhole human family of nations.

"If it be true, and it has never been attempted to be denied, that 'Universal Free Trade is the first condition of universal peace,' then what is the first condition for securing universal Free Trade? Simply that England, or some other great nation, shall adopt the free trade-policy, entirely regardless of the action of any other nation; and I confidently assert that that nation which adopts it first will thenceforth

remain at the head of all civilisation.

"Therefore it remains for your Lordship to take the initiative, by commanding your subordinates to base their action in Paris upon the sound principle your Lordship enunciated—viz., that of entire Free-Trade, or no treaty at all? Trade is not trade unless it be free.

"I am, my lord, your Lordship's humble servant,

"Thos. Briggs.

"P.S.—As this letter on public affairs is written with a view solely to public benefit, unless your lordship objects, I intend to send it to the press. I enclose an article on the Eastern Question, showing that the natural and material guarantee for peace there, as elsewhere, is Free.

Trade everywhere.

"England and France are in great measure responsible for the present state of things in Turkey, inasmuch as they guaranteed her first loans after the Crimean war, thus giving the Sultan and his vicious court a fair start on the road to a ruinous system of borrowing, which led to extravagance in expenditure of the State in war materials and standing armies, aping rich and populous States in that respect without seeing that the people were not producers of wealth to the same extent as the people of the latter, and therefore not able to bear the burden of taxation to the same extent. This extravagance, added to that of the seraglio, at length brought the 'last straw,' in the shape.

of oppressive taxation, upon the people's backs, which in the nature of things resulted in civil war, which took the shape of cruelty towards the Christian populations, inasmuch as they were found without arms when the crisis arrived, and that the Russians had kept alive that creed-jealousy for ulterior purposes.

"If the six Powers could have come to a common understanding to adopt free ports everywhere, they would in a few years find an easy

solution of this Eastern Question.-T. B."

The following acknowledgment was forwarded to me from the Foreign Office:—

"Sir,—I am directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letter and its enclosure of the 22nd ultimo, containing observations with respect to the Anglo-French commercial treaty and the Eastern Question.

"I am, sir, your obedient humble servant,
"T. V. LISTER.

"T. Briggs, Esq., Bela House, Alleyn Park, Dulwich, S.E.

I have not the slightest misgivings about the influence and results of Free Trade, for it is the direct road to universal peace. Free trade, free commerce, free ports, free labour, all of which are fostered, nurtured, sanctioned, and sustained by free thought, altogether making the perfect law of liberty—the brotherhood of man. What Count Bismarck's great and practical intellect prompted him to say in a despatch, November, 1870, will apply to treaties of commerce as much as they do to collective guarantees and protocols, viz., "Collective guarantees have only an apparent value, and when a conflict breaks out each Government seeks after its own interests, shuffles out of compromising obligations, and declines the office of arbiters in order not to incur any responsibility.

"No appeal for aid or to its engagements will arouse it from its inertia. It falls back upon ingenious renderings of diplomatic despatches, in which it is attempted, by sophisms and quibbles, to make out that a casus fæderis has not occurred. The guarantees vanish the moment they are appealed to: rashly to place any reliance on them

would be to place the existence of the nation in peril."

These are grand and practical words of the Count (now Prince) Bismarck, and distinguished by large experience of the affairs of life, and clearly show that guarantees and protocols are framed to regulate a condition of things that are per se evil, in which the contracting parties require restraining from taking advantages based on evil acts prejudicial to the interests of the peoples. In this respect treaties of commerce come under the same category, political and moral, as all protective tariffs, or tariffs for revenue; and they are legalised robberies of the people for the benefit of a few bloated monopolists.

There is too much disposition in men's minds to overleap the facts in these matters, and attribute good and evil results to wrong causes. It may be asked why perfect free trade is not immediately and universally adopted. How is the adherence of many men of clear intellect and practical experience to the opposite doctrine to be accounted for? One of the best answers to these questions was given by the celebrated French economist, Bastiat, in an article written many years ago, entitled, "That which is Seen, and that which is Not Seen," in which he showed that protection is maintained mainly by a view of what the producer gains and a concealment of what the consumer loses; and that if the losses of the millions were as patent and palpable as the profits of the few, no nation would tolerate the system for a single day. Protection accumulates upon a single point the good which it effects, while the evil which it inflicts is infused throughout the community as a whole. The first strikes the eye at once; the latter requires some investigation to become clearly perceptible.

Mankind also divide themselves into two classes—producers and consumers, buyers and sellers. The interest of producers and sellers is, that prices should be high, or that there should be scarcity; the interest of consumers and buyers is, that prices should be low, or that there should be abundance. Every person will also at once admit that it is for the general interest that there should be abundance rather than scarcity. But in the case of individuals controlling large agencies for production, their interest as producers and sellers of large quantities of commodities may be made greater than their interest as consumers, if by the aid of legislation the price of what they produce can be raised by discriminating laws disproportionately over that which they consume,

or to the cost of production.

Men of this class are generally rich beyond the average of the community, and therefore influential in determining fiscal policies; and it is but natural that in so doing they should consult their own interests rather than the interests of the masses. The time, however, is soon coming when the people of united Christendom will wake as it were from a dream, and ask who it was that persuaded them that the way to be rich was for everybody to give as much as possible for everything.

There may be and often are certain benefits accruing to the public from treaties of commerce, and they are supposed to be the outcome of the treaties themselves per se, but they are caused by the increase of liberty of trade that underlies them. Hence it follows, if men and Governments would but see it, the more freedom of trade, the greater the benefits; or, in other words, treaties of commerce are stupid impediments that hamper and cripple wealth-producing industry.

A perception of this logic is well embodied in M. Chevalier's paper contributed to the "Revue des Deux Mondes" this present

year.

He says, "If one, therefore, asks the question whether the trial of freedom of commerce which has been made in France has succeeded or not? the reply could only be this:—The success has exceeded all the expectations of the promoters of the treaty. It is true we are still far from the complete application of the principle, but we have gradually approached it, and we have only to congratulate ourselves on each

step made forward."

I submit that the following striking words and facts from the same "Treaty of Commerce Paper," conclusively show that just in proportion to the abolition of tariffs, so trade, prosperity, and peace follow as a legitimate consequence. "There is at present an event happening which it appears to us decides the question. By the fatal effects of the war of 1870-71, Alsace has been incorporated with Germany, and subject to the German Customs' tariff. Cotton industry was and has remained the principal industry of this province. Her cotton mills, which were very numerous, have passed from the ultra-protective tariff of France to the but little protective tariff of the Germans; they stand the change of system very well, and what proves it is, that at this moment new cotton mills are erected at Alsace, and others are enlarged. It is scarcely possible to believe that if the cotton mills in Normandy and Flanders, which in 1870 were on a par with those of Alsace, were now to be placed on the same footing as the latter, by a reduction of the import duties on yarn, that they would not prosper equally well."

Perhaps a more striking illustration of the results of Free Trade principles, as advocated in these pages, cannot be given than the following extract from Dr. Karl Scherzer, an Austrian Government official. He says, "Singapore, from its singularly favourable geographical position, and the liberality of its political institutions, has made such a stride as is entirely without parallel in the history of the world's trade. From a desolate haunt of piratical foes the island has been converted into a flourishing emporium. About 1,000 foreign vessels and fully 3,000 Malay prahas and Chinese junks flit backwards and forwards annually with all sorts of merchandise and produce, while the value of the other goods annually exchanged here amounts to about £11,000,000. Such is the change that has come over the old unhealthy, ill-omened Malay pirate abode—thanks to a clearly-defined Free Trade If a doubt should obtrude itself as to these brilliant results of the utmost freedom and absence of restrictions upon trade, it must give way before the spectacle presented to the view of the astonished besholder in the harbour of Singapore, the Alexandria of the nineteenth -century. Sixty years ago this place consisted of a few scattered huts on the water-side, the miserable dwellings of fishermen and pirates. The Liverpool reformers ask, 'What is the secret of this wonderful metamorphosis?' Simply the fact that at Singapore there are no import or export duties, no taxes on shipping. Who can calculate the immense development of the national resources which would certainly be produced if the same sound principles were extended to British industry, commerce, and manufactures? Nobody can make such a calculation beforehand; but everybody who thinks must see that the demonstration can be brought about only by means of direct taxation."

"One might believe that there is no one to be considered in Francebut the spinners of yarns; that they alone are noble, powerful, and worthy of fiscal advantages, and that there are no other branches of labour having an interest with us which ask for no protection, but claim instead freedom for their trade. Tarrare, St. Pierre-les-Calais, St. Etienne nevertheless count for something. What prosperity thesecities would attain and what rivalry they would excite in this country,

if the duties on yarns were either reduced or suppressed!"

"Thus, compensatory duties are a snare. The advantages thus. obtained by some are purchased at the cost of heavy burdens imposed upon others. What compensatory duties would you give to the Lyons trade, which to-day is the most suffering industry we have? The only favour she asks-and God knows if it is a favour-is that you will do nothing to increase the duties upon those articles which are the livelihood of her workpeople; above all, that you will give to the world and to foreign nations a good example by making fresh advances towards. commercial liberty instead of remaining inert, or shamefully turning The great interest of France is to increase its exportations by the opening of new markets. Imagine the prosperity of our industries. if the United States would lower its tariff! Our manufacturers, who export goods to the extent of eighty millions sterling, would increase their business by fifty per cent. if the tariffs of the great American Union were diminished. \*But how will you get the United States to lessen their duties if you yourselves stand still like snails, or crawl backward like crabs? All hesitation on your part, nay, more, every backward step. will be an argument for maintenance of the exorbitant duties of the American Custom houses. France has an example to set: the treaties she is about to conclude will have a moral effect. It is true that the preamble of the Tariff Bill does not disclose this. But nothing ismore repugnant to the habit of the official mind than to have elevated and enlarged views, or to discover the distant and complex consequences. which may grow out of an act of this description.

"There is at this moment a thorny question—viz., that of substituting specific for ad valorem duties. We have reviewed this substitution elsewhere; we publish further on a letter from one of our friends, a clever man, M. Gustave Roy, who on the contrary favours specific duties. His opinions may be accepted to the extent that specific duties have advantages; that they are less open to fraud, and disputes less frequent; but in the present case they have the drawback of disguising a marked increase of duty upon articles in general. To establish specific duties it is indispensable that the rates be moderate. A specific duty ought never to be above five or six per cent. of the average value of merchandise of various classes. Even then five per cent. represents a very high specific duty, because the probability is that the mean specific duty of five per cent. would be equivalent to ten

or twelve per cent. on cheap things. Even with very moderate specific duties, the classifications must be increased. Specific duties have the further inconvenience that, as a manufacture improves and the cost of its production becomes reduced, they remain steadfast, representing an ever increasing portion of the actual cost. Whilst the proposed aim of protective duties is that they shall diminish, the specific duty, on the contrary, weighs heavier, the greater the industrial progress made tends to lower the cost of the article. Just this sort of thing has latterly happened to iron. We shall not be disposed to submit to specific duties without the classifications are increased, and no duty exceeds six per cent. of the average value of each kind. How much we regret the absence of Ministers of great capacity! All that we have written and spoken in favour of commercial liberty is but child's play compared to the floods of eloquence let loose some years ago at Bordeaux on this very subject by the present head of the Cabinet, ore rotundo!

"We have to believe that our negotiators will imbibe the large and fruitful ideas and instruction formerly explained and defended by the chief of the Cabinet and his honourable colleague, M. Léon Say. see with pleasure amongst them the eminent economist. M. Léonce de Lavergne. He has written the lives of the economists of the 18th century—Quesnay, Turgot, those clear and straightforward minds who could then divine the great benefits which commercial freedom, which as yet had scarcely taken form, ought to confer upon France. he would like to attach his name to a treaty which should not be a simple copy of its predecessor, and still less lead us back towards a course of things universally condemned, but which should record important reduction and the abolition of duties. The addition of a French manufacturer to the negotiators is spoken of. This is certainly a very seductive idea, which God preserve us from rejecting! But who is the man who has the right to speak in the name of all the manufacturers in France? Is it M. Pouyer-Quertier, who had the misfortune to connect his name with the sad campaign of 1871 in favour of taxes upon raw materials, who had then every chamber of commerce and every consultative chamber of arts and manufactures against him, save five? Is it M. Feray, formerly his vigorous antagonist, but now we believe, the ally of M. Pouyer-Quertier? Is it M. Fernand Raoul Duval, the Liberal reporter of the sub-committee upon textiles in the Upper Council of Commerce? Is it M. Tezenas de Montcel, member of the same Council, and the indefatigable adversary of all duties on cotton and woollen yarns? Is it M. Sevène, who also sits at the Upper Council, and who asks for nothing better than the abolition of all customs duties 1 ls it M. Gonin, the President of the Paris Chamber of Commerce, who considers the system of temporary admissions as that best suited to French industry? Verily, amidst all these gentlemen of divergent opinions, he would be a hardy person who would venture to point out the exclusive representative of French

business men. In any case, one thing must not be forgotten, and that is that France exports manufactures to the value of eighty millions sterling, and it is the evident interest of the shippers and exporters to have unlimited commercial liberty. This would be accorded to them if

the matter was one of simple justice."

Our French economists would fain persuade both their own people and us that a temporising programme is the best. For instance, they go on to define "simple justice" by asking for a reduction of Customs tariffs. This I utterly denounce as unsound. Has it not been tried and found wanting? Does not the bit-by-bit policy of Free Trade in England show its failure in the present state of Ireland, in the chronic state of discontent in English agricultural districts, and in the fact that misery and degradation, want and starvation, go side by side with gorgeous palaces and untold wealth? Moreover, is it not to be seen in the standing armies of the civilised world? As an illustration, I give the following extract from the celebrated Carlyle.

"What, speaking in quite unofficial language, is the net purport and upshot of War? To my own knowledge, for example, there dwell and toil, in the British village of Dumdrudge, usually some five From these, by certain 'natural enemies' of thehundred souls. French, there are successively selected, during the French war, say thirty able-bodied men. Dumdrudge, at her own expense, has suckled and nursed them; she has, not without difficulty and sorrow, fed them up to manhood and even trained them to crafts, so that one can weave, another build, another hammer, and the weakest can stand under thirty stone avoirdupois. Nevertheless, amid much weeping and swearing, they are selected, all dressed in red, and shipped away, at the public charge, some two thousand miles, or say only tothe south of Spain, and fed there till wanted. And now to that samespot in the south of Spain are thirty similar French artisans, from a French Dumdrudge, in like manner wending: till at length, after infinite effort, the two parties come into actual juxtaposition; and Thirty stands fronting Thirty, each with a gun in his hand. Straightway the word 'Fire!' is given: and they blow the souls out of one another; and in place of sixty brisk, useful craftsmen, the world has sixty dead carcases, which it must bury, and anew shed tears for. Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the devil is, not the smallest. They lived far apart; were the entirest strangers; nay, in so wide a Universe, there was even, unconsciously, by Commerce, some "mutual helpfulness between them. How then? Simpleton? Their Governors. had fallen out, and, instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make these poor blockheads shoot."

No, "Monsieur Leroy-Beaulieu." If you wish for "simple justice" toreign, the first condition to this end is that you effect the total, immediate, and unconditional abolition of all Customs and Excise tariffs, and make real property do its duty as well as maintain its rights, by taxing itself to the full amount of Government expenditure. Then, and not till then, shall we have peace on earth and goodwill.

to man.

# CHAPTER IX.

ON THE RELATIONS OF THE COLONIES TO THE MOTHER COUNTRY CONSIDERED FROM AN AGRICULTURAL, ECONOMICAL, AND COM-MERCIAL POINT OF VIEW."

"COMMERCE supplies the wants of one country by importing the riches of another, and gives a value to superfluities which they could not otherwise obtain. It increases the revenue of the State, and preserves the indepen-

dence of the people."—H.

"Behold us here so many thousands-millions-and increasing at the rate of fifty every hour. We are right willing and able to work, and on the planet earth is plenty of work and wages for a million times as many. We ask if you mean to lead us towards work? Try to lead us, by ways new, never yet heard of, till this new unheard-of time; or if you declare you cannot lead us, and expect that we are to remain quietly unled, and in -a composed manner die of starvation, what is it you mean to do with us? This question I say has been put in the hearing of all Britain and will be again put, and ever again, till some answer be given."—CARLYLE, in 1843. Past and Present.

A Y interest in the colonies commenced in 1851, when I saw that Australia could produce cotton worth 4s. to 4s. 6d. per lb.; two bales of which I myself examined at the London Exhibition, at the time when the best Sea Island cotton of America could be bought for about 3s. per lb.: I began to think there were hopes for old England vet.

The four cardinal points which secured to the Americans the monopoly of the supply of this indispensable raw material, were not.

it is true, achieved as yet in Australia, namely :-

1st. Quality. 2nd. Quantity. 3rd. Price. And

4th. Permanency of Supply.

But as to the first, viz., quality, there it was before our eyes, two bales from Sydney, New South Wales, worth from 4s. to 4s. 6d. per lb.; this was a fact no one attempted to gainsay.

<sup>, \*</sup> This was read in the Rooms of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, 1869.

Now, as to our second cardinal point, the grand stumbling-block, the asses' bridge, as it were, of the problem; I found that the colony of Queensland was the seat of Australian cotton growing, and this colony did not then possess a population o 50,000 souls, and these were principally engaged in wool growing; want of labour was the universal cry, as being an insurmountable obstacle to cotton growing.

In point of quantity, therefore, the case was apparently a hopeless one; but if by any means we could divert the stream of emigration from west to south-east, it would go far in the course of a few years to remove this impediment, for we were at that moment (and have been ever since) practically building a new city, of from 10,000 to 12,000 souls, every month, for our ungrateful cousins across the Atlantic;\* who are now making a profit of 100 per cent. on that labour, to the extent of 300,000,000 dollars, on cotton growing alone, whilst our manufacturing population are starving on their losses in manipulating it.

In face of this, still they go; 10,000 to 12,000 a month of our best and thriftiest "sons of toil" are emigrating from Liverpool to the United States, leaving the colonies and the home labour market (as a rule) only the criminal, the pauper, the infant, the aged, the ignorant,

the imbecile, the vagrant, and the sturdy beggar to choose from.

Knowing that the material and social well-being of the whole British empire depended mainly upon the four cardinal points being brought to a successful issue, and in this view I might quote numerous facts as corroborative evidence—for instance, since the Elizabethan era this country has drifted by natural laws from being an agricultural to that of a manufacturing and commercial country, so much so, that, as far back as 1854, we had steam machinery and power which represented "500,000,000" pairs of hands.† Will it not, therefore, occur to every thinking man that, in stopping the supply of cotton, you stop the greater part of British industry? By way of illustration, let us state the facts; first, that 600,000 odd of British workmen went to America during the four years' war; second, that if they had gone to a British cotton-growing colony, which had given a homestead to each family of 16c acres-say, six to each family-this would give 100,000 families, producing at the rate of £200 each family for the second year's operations of cotton, besides finding themselves in provisions, say, 2,000,000 bales of cotton. This would involve the building of 333 ships of 1,000 tons each; would not the Millwall shipbuilding industry feel the effects of such an operation? The canvas and sailmakers, the railways, the mines, and a thousand others too numerous to be stated here, would feel the beneficent effects brought about by a sound colonial land policy.

There are other points which I will bring before you, showing further obstacles which still hang like millstones round our necks.

<sup>\*</sup> Since this was written they have increased to 28,000 a month.

<sup>†</sup> See Nicholson, on "Moral and Social Progress."

What is it that has made the United States of America what they are? What, save the boundless supply of land that enables every man on the other side of the Atlantic, who has willing hands and an average brain to command all the conveniences and comforts of life?

Mr. Torrens, M.P. for Cambridge, says :-

"The Crown lands of the colonies belong to the whole people of the British Empire, and not exclusively to the comparative few already settled there."

What evidence have we that the colonial governments appreciate this view of the question? What evidence have we that tends to prove the colonies to be just, generous, and loyal to the mother-country? None—absolutely nothing but empty words. On the contrary, we have abundant evidence to prove that they are, in too many instances,

ungrateful, hostile, and arrogant.

First. They are ungrateful, inasmuch as they have taken, with the connivance of our unwise statesmen at home, gratuitous possession of that unbounded territory on which we are too apt to boast "the sun never sets." Territory won by the blood, the treasure, the indomitable courage and perseverance of our forefathers, and at the expense of the tax-payers of all Britain, and which they now wish to keep in a state of nature for all time to come rather than offer the land to our people here in free grants, in such proportions as would induce them to go and settle down amongst them to till the soil, build their cities, make their railroads, extend their navigation, assist nature by irrigation works, where necessary, &c., whilst we are taxing ourselves to the tune of millions annually for their protection.

Secondly. Hostile they most assuredly are when they pass laws to bar our commerce, and by their tariffs obstruct our trade with them,

to the hurt of both.

Thirdly. And for their arrogance I would refer to the correspondence in the newspapers of a recent date, objecting to our convict settlements in our own colonies. The assertion of this last pretension might have been respected, provided they had acknowledged the rights of all immigrants of good character to grants of land under a similar law to that of the Homestead Law of the United States—I repeat, to all immigrants—whether Britons or not, so long as they are of good character, willing to be naturalised, and settle down as civilised men, "for how know you but that, by so doing, you may entertain an angel unawares."

The Homestead Law tends to fix them to the soil, cements their affections to the government and the country who have placed them in the position to enable them, in every sense of the word, to reap the fruits of their own labour. It also tends to create a thrifty yeoman class, lovers of law and order, always ready to come to the rescue when their adopted country may, by any chance, need their services. It also tends to make broad acres wave with corn side by side with gold-fields, as witnessed in California. Well might Cobden, when he heard

of the American Homestead Law being passed, exclaim, "That law will virtually depopulate Europe."

When a man severs himself from his native country, from his family circle, and all that is dear to him, and this from dire necessity for want of employment, and settles down in a land thousands of miles off, a land requiring the hand of man to convert it from a "howling wilderness into a fruitful field;" can it be a matter of doubt in the minds of the rulers of that country that this man is entitled to claim so much of the soil as will suffice for a homestead for the subsistence of himself and the family he brings with him?

Mr. Torrens had spoken in favour of Edward Gibbon Wakefield's Land Law of 1834; a plan for selling the land of the colonies at £1 per acre, in order to raise a fund for the purpose of promoting immigration. Subsequently the American Government passed a law by which land, even within town sites, should be alienated at 1½ dollars, or about 5s. per acre, and some time after, finding the beneficent effects of that liberal policy, they enacted that in all new territory the State should grant 160 acres in fee simple to every family settling down outside a town site, on the sole consideration of residing thereon, and

cultivating 10 per cent. in five years.

This is what is termed the Homestead Law, and was a recognition of the rights of labour, under the operation of which a wedding of labour to the soil is effected, which Adam Smith says "is the source of all wealth," and the only way, under God's blessing, in a new country to create the greatest happiness for the greatest number. this law every man finds a field for his labour, and an employer that he will never strike against, namely, himself; and his wages come direct from "the Giver of all good things." As Franklin says, "The surest bank ever a man drew against was a bank of earth, if he only took care of it." Every emigrant so settled will have an interest, stimulated by every motive of self-preservation and social economy, in bringing over others in almost countless numbers to help him in the mighty work before him, and the result is, as we now all of us find, a nation in the west who can defy the world in arms, whose agriculture puts to shame all nations upon earth, and whose commerce and manufactures, were it not for the blighting influence of hostile protective tariffs, would very soon outweigh our own, and that to our mutual good.

Now let us view the effects of the policy adopted in our colonies, initiated, as I before said, by the efforts of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, some thirty years ago, which policy was suggested originally by John S. Mill (at least, so Mr. Mill himself asserted on the platform, in one of his speeches when he was first a candidate for Westminster). This plan was suggested, and acted upon in the onset, no doubt with the best of motives, but, as the sequel has already proved, it has had the most baneful effect upon—first, the manhood—secondly, the material wealth—and, thirdly, the moral fame and prestige of the British name

throughout the, whole civilised world. Moreover, it has caused our colonies to remain a perpetual blank on the map of the world.

That the manhood is lost to this country is evident from the fact that the flower of our artisan labour and capital are fast drifting to a country where, on their settling down, they become England's haters. This state of feeling is fostered by the system of hostile tariffs before named ostensibly for the protection of home manufactures, but really and practically to put money into the pockets of a few manufacturers, at the expense of the rest of the community of the United States. Not only that, but, most probably, also from the love and affection for the country which has provided them a homestead, and thereby brightened their prospects for generations to come—that has lifted them from the brink of Pauperism to a state which enables them to live by honest labour—in fact, to a state of semi-independence—these will all have their due weight in alienating their affections from the old country, for "where a man's treasure is, there will his heart be also."

But you may naturally ask, "How has Mr. Wakefield's plan effected all this eyil, seeing that the land was to be sold at £1 per acre, and the money used for promoting emigration?" There are so many points condemnatory of the policy, as being one diametrically opposed to sound principles of political economy, that it would be beyond the limits of this work to cite a tenth part of them—suffice it to say that, to sell a thing it requires two parties—viz., a buyer and a seller. How an article for £1, when he can get as good, if not a better article, 4,000 miles, off, for 5s.?

Moreover, how can you expect to sell an acre of land for £1, when is not visual it is not worth the tenth part of a farthing?

it is notorious it is not worth the tenth part of a farthing?

Now it is well known that the latter price is the value set upon the land by the Colonial Government, when they, through their commissioners, were in London, treating for the cession of the whole territory in bulk; and unfortunately for this country, and also for the colonies, our statesmen of the day gave it up to them, without conditions of any kind as to its alienation to British subjects for all future time until the land was fully settled. They might, with quite as much wisdom, have passed an Act of Parliament enforcing every man to sell his wool at twenty shillings per pound, well knowing that at that price a buyer would never be found.

Can we have stronger evidence of the utter failure of the poundan-acre policy than the fact that they have, of late years, every session of the local parliament, been tinkering and trying to amend it by adopting a more liberal one, but vested interests having grown up and blended with the original evil policy, the difficulties of altering the law so as to meet the necessity of the case were found to be almost insurmountable? Another proof is found in the fact that the Act has been invariably evaded, and in many of the colonies the land

revenue has been misapplied.

Moreover, and this is the gist of the whole question, this poundan-acre policy has rendered the colonies of Great Britain places to be avoided by the thrifty emigrant who can pay his own passage and support himself until his first crop can be made available for his sustenance.

Hence the Colonial Governments, as a rule, are obliged to receive their immigrants in forma pauperis. This fact alone is sufficient to

dispose of the three propositions before alluded to.

Let us now glance at the state of affairs as they now stand at home. The country is agitated throughout its length and breadth; the people are feeling the pressure of a want of employment, and famine prices for all necessaries and comforts of life. The agitation has taken the shape of a pressure upon Government for some help towards emigration for the people. This has been followed by a debate in the House of Lords. In the Times report of that debate Lord Houghton is made to say, "With regard to emigration to our Australian and other colonies the numbers were, in 1868, 196,000; 1867, 195,000; and in 1863, 223,000." Now, on referring to the official returns, I find that in 1868 the Australian group got less than two thousand, and Canada less than sixteen thousand; his lordship must therefore have included the emigration to the United States for that year in his figures, consequently the latter country must have taken the bulk of the remainder, which is about the usual proportion—viz., eleven-twelfths of the whole emigration of the country. There is none of Gibbon Wakefield's plan there, but there is a Homestead Law.

Lord Granville treats the subject as a grim joke. His quotations about our Irish brethren having sent £14,000,000 wherewith to fetch their kith and kin over to join them at the other side of the Atlantic has more significance in it than his lordship is aware; and if his lordship has granted the Hudson's Bay Territory to the Canadian Government without taking the material guarantee that they will pass an Act making a fundamental principal in their constitution to grant a Homestead Law as liberal, if not more so, than the Homestead Law of the United States, and also that there shall be entire free trade between the Dominion and the mother-country, and thereby secure a mutual bond of peace—I say, if his lordship has not taken such guarantee, he has committed the last act of a series of wrongs upon the people of this country, which have been promoted in the Colonial Office ever since the policy of granting self-government for the colonies was inaugurated.

It was pointed out by letter to a noble lord in 1864, that such a policy was pregnant with infinite danger to future generations of Britons,

and more especially to the colonies themselves.

If his lordship has taken the said guarantee, then I would recommend as a further safeguard for the proper administration of the same, the insertion of a clause in the contract something to the same effect as the following extract from a Bill, 25 and 26 Vict., September, 1862,

entitled "A Bill to entitle Her Majesty to erect North Australia into a British colony, and to provide for the colonisation thereof." not aware that this Bill was ever passed; but the words I principally rely upon are found in page 4, section 6, and which run as follows:

"Her Majesty from time to time hereafter at her pleasure, testified by writing under the hand of a Secretary of State, may appoint five fit persons to be Crown Commissioners; and those Commissioners shall be one body politic and corporate, by the name of the Commissioners for North Australia, with perpetual succession, and a common seal; and by that name shall sue and be sued; and those Commissioners shall, in the name and on behalf of Her Majesty, hold all the waste lands under this Act in North Australia, in trust for the people of the British Empire at large; and shall be and remain incorporate so long as there are in North Australia any waste lands undisposed of, or independence declared."

If there be any truth in the above plain statements—and I contend there is not only truth, but also, the very essence of economy, justice, common sense, and sound policy-then 1 contend, as do nine-tenths of my fellow working-men who have thought the matter over without party or personal prejudice, that every honest Englishman, Irishman, or Scotchman, on setting his foot on the shores of a British colony, no matter how, so long as he lawfully gets there, has the inalienable right to a free grant out of the undisposed of Crown lands, sufficient in quantity and quality to maintain himself and family in comfort, so long as he is willing to settle down, clear and cultivate it, and conform in all other respects to the laws of the local and general government.

Finally, let our Government and those of our colonies recognise the principle that it is a grievous wrong and a suicidal policy to seek to raise a revenue out of the first alienation of the waste Crown lands of the colonies, and it is equally wrong to grant large tracts to one individual as a rule. Let them also recognise the fact that inter colonial Free Trade is the only intercolonial bond of peace and amity, and that universal Free Trade is the only pioneer to universal peace; they will then find a will, as there is also to be found a "way," to inaugurate an era which the poet had in view when he said-

"Let each man seek his own in all men's good, And all men work in noble brotherhood.

After reading the above before the National Association, a discussion followed, in which the following gentlemen took part:- The Chairman, the late W. Pollard Urquhart, Esq., M.P., Sir George Grey, Mr. Torrens, M.P., and Messrs. Noble, Hill, Macdonald, Wheeler, Walker, Pears, H. N. Mozley, Wallace Harding, Sheriff, and Clerk.

Several objections were raised by two or three gentlemen, to whom

I replied as follows:

Before commencing my reply to the points raised in the discussion, let it be clearly understood that I yield to no man in love for the colonies. I wish to see them prosper and multiply in wealth and population. I wish to see them take the good leaf out of the Yankee book, as well as, or rather than the evil one in regard to their lawmaking. Mr. Noble says that in the Western States of America the state of feeling which prevails was very much more favourable to England than was to be found along the shores of the Atlantic; by this he tacitly admits they are, as a rule, England-haters. As regards the guarantee in question, he says we cannot take it because we have given self-government to the colonies; but as to this guarantee, I only suggested it in the case of Canada and the Hudson's Bay territory, which was not yet given away. If they (the colonies) would not give the said guarantee, then the territory should be withheld, and not given except to those who were wise enough to accept the terms. In respect to bargains made with the colonies, he remarked "that there would be no security that they would keep terms with us." My opinion is, that the bargain suggested in the guarantee is of such a nature as to be a security in itself; it being so just, so generous, so politic, so economic, and so mutual in its benefits as to secure the loyalty and goodwill of the mass of the people on both Mr. Macdonald is right in suggesting that England ought rather to send emigrants to Canada than to the United States; but, until the guarantee suggested be a fact accomplished, these emigrants will, as a rule, filter through Canada into the States. What Mr. Pears says as regards the resources of the Australian colonies conflicts very markedly with the account given in the prospectus of the Colonial Government Emigration Commission: as also with the speeches of Mr. Torrens and other witnesses from the colonies; and, as I think, Mr. Pears puts himself on the horns of a dilemma. He says that "Australia is nearly as big as Europe, yet the available land was so small that they could not offer it so freely as the Americans." If he means that the land is not available because it is already occupied and covered with people, then why seek for emigrants? But when we reflect that the Australian colonies alone cover an area of nearly two thousand. millions of acres, with a population of little more than one and a half millions of souls, further comment on this point is certainly unnecessary. But if Mr. Pears means that the colonial lands are so sterile and uncultivable as a rule, then I think he is not borne out by the facts as related to us by the best authorities on the spot. Moreover, if the land is so worthless why make any difficulty about giving it away under the action of a just and liberal land law. With regard to the inducements they offer to emigrants, I admit there is in one colony (Queensland) a Homestead Law; but it having been so recently passed as 1868, it did not occur to me as relevant: however, we will, as soon as she has repealed her hostile tariffs, pronounce her the only colony that is loyal to the people as well as to the sovereign of the mother-country. Respecting the thousand acres to be had in Tasmania gratis, they are not granted under a Homestead Law. Several

speakers, especially Mr. Torrens and Mr. Pears, animadverted strongly on the subject of sending convicts to the colonies, but not one of them attempted to reply to my remarks in answer to that point, viz., the asserting their right to object to our convict settlements in their neighbourhood, which might have been respected, provided they (the colonial government) had acknowledged the right of good characters to grants of land, &c. (See Vol. II., page 522, Social Science record of proceedings.) Mr. Torrens says Western Australia is a barren country. As regards that, I will read an extract from a letter received from Melbourne in November, 1867, in which the writer "represents the colony of Western Australia to be, in his opinion, better adapted for the growth of cotton than Queensland, on account of the cheapness of land and convict labour. The climate and its agricultural resources are about the same as Oueensland, with the additional advantage of having a plentiful supply of water for irrigation:" Now, although Western Australia is two thousand miles, or thereabouts, from the seat of government in South Australia, those gentlemen will not tolerate Western Australia receiving convicts to act as pioneers to the development of their resources, whereas in the Island of New Caledonia, not six hundred miles off, the French have established a convict settlement, where they have a Homestead Lawnot only for the benefit of good characters, but also for those who are sent as convicts, to enjoy on certain conditions. Thus, the reclamation of the wilderness goes on simultaneously with that of the character of the operator, showing how beautiful are the works of mercy when justly and economically administered. It has been reported, upon good authority, that, such is the development of this island, it is already attracting on a large scale settlers from our neighbouring colonies. I trust Mr. Torrens will now see there is a way (if only the colonial legislators would find a will), by virtue of wedding labour to the soil, to teach even the convict that honesty is the best policy, and the latter, having tried both, would know it by experience. It is much safer for society in general that convicts should be shipped from a crowded country to a place where their labour can be utilised for the common benefit: where there is less opportunity of their practising upon wealthy communities where temptation meets them at every turn, and also to where there are none of those nurseries for crime called receiving houses. We are now (13 years after this was written) beginning to feel the effects of turning our criminals out upon a wealthy population, in the shape of burglars and robbers, or by ticket-of-leave men. As regards the population of the Australian colonies, Mr. Torrens put it at two and a half millions, whereas the census of 1861 puts it at only 1,266,432, the census for 1866 not yet being complete. I must endorse what Sir G. Grey says in respect to "Parliament taking no interest in colonial questions;" but why does it not? Because the public does not; and why does the public take no interest in them? Because the press does not; and why does the press exhibit so much indifference to its obvious duty? Because the subject is not to the taste of the general reader, and therefore it will not pay. The Chairman seems to be satisfied with the progress of the colonies. I am not. I did not assume that the colonies made no progress; but I must still hold that this progress is very slow, and not what it ought to be. The data, I consider, stands out in bold relief in that part of my paper where I say that eleven-twelfths of our thrifty sons of toil who sail from Liverpool as emigrants go to the United States, and only one-twelfth to Australia.

Statistics showing the proportion of Englishmen I have not at hand, but from memory I can safely say that, within the last twelve months more English and Scotch have gone to the States than Irish. I regret to find from his remarks on the state of feeling in America and its causes, that our worthy chairman left out of sight the question of hostile tariffs. The loyalty alluded to by Mr. Pears, as expressed in connection with the Duke of Edinburgh, will remain an empty sound so long as the colonies remain without a Homestead Law and with hostile tariffs. With regard to Tasmania, he says, "that half the population were convicts—there were convict schoolmasters, convict officials, and convict servants, &c." Why should we deny the convict an opportunity of redeeming his character? Tasmania would seem to hold the position of moral and social refining-pot for degraded humanity on its way to the Australian continent. Besides all this, let us consider it on the broad ground of even-handed justice and fair dealing. Why should the mother country tax herself with the expense of rearing and educating her children, for the sole purpose of allowing the few in the antipodes to come and pick and choose amongst them as though they were so many slaves, in order to take them as menial servants, when it is notorious that those few are assuming to themselves the ownership of territories, of waste lands as large as the United States, without attempting to inaugurate a Homestead Law, which would at once develop the resources of their soil, and secure to the virtuous and thrifty their due reward. Besides, this territory is the birthright of all Englishmen, and not of the few only. Mr. Pears says, "there is no hostile or any other sentiments about their protective tariffs." Protective tariffs are in themselves a commercial war, and damage the interest of the common weal almost as much as physical war; they are therefore hostile as a fact, if not as a sentiment. He says, moreover, that "I thought self-government ought not to be given to the colonies." This I most emphatically deny. What I said (and what I still hold to) was that the policy of granting self-government to the colonies, without taking the necessary guarantee respecting free grants of land and Free Trade, is fraught with infinite danger to future generations of Britons, and more especially to the colonies themselves. It forcibly reminds me of the proverb which says, "A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." Mr. Hastings, I regret to find, does not do me justice on the question of convicts. He says,

Mr. Briggs seems to think that England has a right to shoot her criminal rubbish in any part of her empire that might be most convenient to herself, without reference to the interest or wishes of the colonist. I must respectfully repudiate this rendering of my meaning, and would refer him again to that part of my paper which speaks of the convict system. Nevertheless, inasmuch as the colonies are integral parts of the empire, I hold that there is less danger to the common weal in employing the convict to do the roughing part of the work of pioneering for civilised society, and, moreover, a greater chance of reclaiming him, especially under the French system as pursued in the colony of New Caledonia, where the convict is put on a block of land with suitable tools in hand to clear and cultivate it, and the only alternative is, work or starve; and at the end of a given time, if he has conducted himself properly, the land he has cleared and cultivated is his own, and he becomes a useful member of society. Did it never occur to Mr. Hastings that it is more injurious to the empire as a whole to shoot the criminal rubbish in the midst of ber teeming population at home than to send them to her outside farms to develop their resources. Mr. Hill denies that the colonies remain a blank on the map of the world. If anyone will look on the map of Australia, he will not find more than a mere fringe of settlements, the interior being a complete blank. Here is South Australia, to wit, which he specially mentions as an example of development. Let us compare this colonyas to area and population, it has a territory three times the size of Great Britain, with a population only of about 170,000; which is equal to a fourth-rate town in a civilised country. Considering how many years this colony has been in existence, further comment on this point is unnecessary. I propose now to read a short extract from a letter which was written some months ago, to prove where the shoe was pinching John Bull; it will explain why I made cotton take so prominent a part in my paper. Quoting from an extract which is copied from a Queensland paper into the journals of the Society of Arts, December 11th, 1868, page 61:—"There is a growing impression that this staple (cotton) is one of the safest, if not the most remunerative, in which Queensland growers can invest. Confidence is felt in the crop as experience is gained, and it is found that instead of five or six acres a family can manage twenty to thirty acres." Now it is well known that Queensland cotton is the finest that the world has ever produced, both as to length and strength of fibre. Well, let us take the minimum, say twenty acres, at a bale per acre, of 400 lbs. per bale, as the produce of each family; and let us, for the sake of argument, assume six to a family, and that the 600,000 of our fellow-subjects who sought a new home in America during the four years' war, had, by some wise effort of our Government, been landed in this beautiful colony, what would have been the results according to the figures above? It would have produced for the wealth of the colony, as the value of her exports in this one article alone twenty millions sterling, reckoning it at 6d. perIb., which is much below its present value in Liverpool. I am informed by an official in Queensland that the difficulty (labour) could have been easily overcome by importing Indian or Chinese coolies. But it is generally asked how all this cotton can affect the interest of the London poor, or, rather, the "Millwall shipbuilders and the Bethnal Green silk-weavers?" Well, in the first place, these people, I suppose, will require clothing; therefore they are consumers of cotton goods. I assume that Mr. Hill will not deny that these people would feel the advantage of getting a shirt for 2s. or 3s., rather than have to pay 8s. or ios. for it. Secondly, the shipbuilders would find their yards gradually filling with busy hands, as this 333,000 tons of cotton per annum required moving from the antipodes. Not only they, but a thousand and one of different industries must share in the general prosperity. Even the poor weavers of Bethnal Green would find that the Lancashire lads would be spending some of their surplus earnings in silk ribbons, handkerchiefs or dresses, as the case may be-probably manipulated by those poor Bethnal Greeners-to adorn their favourite Lancashire witches. Then, again, the very ships required to bring the cotton might be freighted outwards with cargoes of the produce of both Lancashire and Bethnal Green, whilst taking out the emigrants. would be a bold man who would venture to estimate the amount of good to all the distressed districts by removing all the willing ones to the antipodes. This would be another source of freight for the ships built at Millwall and elsewhere, and the labour market would be brought into a more healthy state everywhere. Finally, let me liken "King Cotton" in his relation to the social, moral, and material well-being of the whole British Empire, to the mainspring of a watch. If the mainspring be broken, the watch will not work. Therefore, until our legislators can recognise the fact that cotton is the mainspring of Britsh industry at home-

"Their attempt at legislation Will be all vanity and vexation."

If we take a glance at the emigration question, we shall soon see that the fact of the great prosperity of the United States of America has been materially induced by the facilities with which emigrants have been able to obtain land after they have qualified themselves there under an employer. The Homestead system has been an "open sesame" of prosperity, and has bred and located a population in about two generations of forty millions,\* whose labours have transformed the face of the country, turning a wilderness into fruitful fields and happy and prosperous homesteads. This grand example is at length teaching the Canadian Government (where, in that time, the people have only reached three millions) to amend their land laws, and pull them into

<sup>\*</sup> It is now (1882) 52 millions, and receiving immigrants at the rate of a million a year from Europe.

more harmony with those of the United States. These matters form a vital lesson for New Zealand and Australia, a new leaf worthy to be

translated into the year-books of those Colonies.

To facilitate this object I have heartily supported the Emigration League, promoting emigration to the British Colonies, with a view to the consolidation and civilisation of the Empire, and at the same time find a field for reproductive employment of the starving millions of our sons of toil.

The Homestead law of America has, during the last year alone, carved out of the wilderness no less than 60,000 farms in the United States.

Surely, that fact alone is sufficient to open the eyes of a wise govern-

ment in the Colonies.

These 60,000 families are destined to become employers of labour, and would be, if settled in our own colonies, a self-acting machinery for assisting emigration, by following the example of our once Irish brethren in America, in sending remittances to help their friends over rather than allow them to fall into distress and degradation at home.

I hope that a pressure will be brought to bear on the Government at home, that will have the effect of moving them to take steps for removing all difficulties in the way of emigration to the colonies." It has been self-evident for years to all right-thinking minds that the slow progress of British Colonies lies in the want of sound land laws, through which they are perpetually doomed to be deserted by the two classes which are indispensable to the conversion of a wild and undeveloped country into a great nation—viz., the aristocracy, or learned governing class, and the yeoman or farming class.

In all new countries these are absolutely indispensable, in order to provide a place for the artisan class. Now it is plain to me that the colonies are drifting into the same state in regard to absentee landlordism as Ireland has been groaning under for centuries. Why do the few who make fortunes in the colonies return to the old country? Simply because their class is not numerous enough to make society—hence they feel a kind of social void, which they seek to fill up in the old country, where it is to be found by getting M.P. attached

to their names.

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Why do the masses in colonial large towns kick against the introduction of more labour to compete with their own? Simply because they cannot manufacture 60,000 employers of labour every year by virtue of sound land laws. And why do the same class, who are chiefly artisans, clerks, and tradesmen, urge their legislators to pass the pernicious laws which go to set class against class—viz., the hostile-protective tariff. Simply from the same cause—for the same reason.

Let our Government in Downing Street issue a general order

<sup>\*</sup> In the recent Irish Land Act we are actually subsidising from our revenue the emigration of our people to the United States of America, who bar out our commerce by hostile tariffs.

that they are going to set an example to the self-governing colonies, by making it a fundamental principal in all Crown colonies, that the whole of the waste lands are to be surveyed and marked out into forty-acre blocks, four of which blocks are to be given to each settler on the sole condition of cultivation and occupation, and they will very soon then settle the Irish land difficulty and England's pauperism also.

This matter may be further illustrated by my reprinting in this place a correspondence which took place in 1871, about Western

Australia :-

# "NEW GOVERNOR FOR QUEENSLAND.

"To the Editor of the Bee-Hive.

"Sir,—I enclose report from the Times of a meeting at Willis's Rooms, where a dinner was given to the Marquis of Normanby, before taking his departure for Queensland on the 19th inst. I also enclose for insertion in your valuable space a copy of a letter sent to Mr. Roche, the Hon. Sec. of the Royal Colonial Institute, in reply to an invitation sent me to take part in getting up the said dinner. In publishing this letter, I have no interest or feeling save that of opening the eyes of my fellow-subjects as to the way the outside farms of Great Britain are mismanaged. The noble lords seem to make a great point of the attachments of the colonists, to the mother-country, and yet they are blind to the one thing needful for securing that mutual bond of peace and unity which is so desirable-viz., 'Free Trade in the produce of the land.' God forbid that I should say anything to lessen the strength of attachment of the colonists to the mother-country, but I must say this, that the importance of their attachment can only be measured by the numbers of the colonists, and whatever tends to stint the growth of population in the colonies must lessen, in the nature of things, the importance of their usefulness and mutual good offices either in peace or war. Mr. Roche has not yet acknowledged the receipt of the letter, or I would have sent you his reply.

"Yours truly, T. BRIGGS."

"My Dear Sir,—I received your circular of the 27th ult., inviting me to take part in a movement for getting up a dinner to the Marquis of Normanby, on the occasion of his appointment as Governer of Queensland, previous to his departure from England.

"In thanking you for this mark of respect, I regret to say I am no longer a "Fellow' of the institute; and I regret it more on account of the reason for withdrawing from it.

"I responded to your last invitation, which was to hear a paper

read by Mr. Macfie, M.P., with a hope to find some improvement in the *rationale* of the institution; but the speeches that followed so excellent a paper were of such a nature to damp my ardour for the cause of English colonisation, and I came away full of sorrow and indignation at the thought that, for want of better champions, the battle of British colonisation was utterly and for ever lost.

"The noble lords and honourable gentlemen, no doubt, are very conscientious and honourable men, and highly commendable for their zeal in the cause; but somehow they fail to appreciate the right thing to do or say with a view to peopling the colonies of Great

Britain.

"They know that the 'Glory of a country is in the multitude of its people.' They cry, 'Emigrate! Emigrate!' and fail to see that the people are emigrating to the United States at the rate of nearly

200,000 annually.

"Queensland, which is the model British colony, only got for her share last year 2,988 emigrants. Mr. Douglas informed me the other day that, if he had been empowered by the laws of Queensland to pay the full passage in place of £8 only per adult, he could have sent thousands more of the right sort.

"Now, if the friends of the colonies could only estimate the sterling value of each emigrant to the State they would find that it was worth while investing another £8 per adult by paying the full passage, say,

£16.

"For instance, the lowest estimate of their value (viz., that of Mr. Macfie, M.P., in his paper of the other evening) is £400 per head to the State. Now, it seems absurd, on the face of it, that Government should refuse to see what seems so plain to any man of common sense-viz, that it is the very essence of an economic policy to give £16 for the transfer of a wealth-producing machine (which we may call the emigrant for the sake of argument) worth to the State £400 the moment he lands from the mother-country to the colony. The late President Lincoln and his secretary, Seaward, put the value at £1,000 per head; this is a fact well known, but such a fact cannot be too often repeated until it is well rooted in the minds of our colonial governments and people. The most astounding fact is that we should be pouring into the lap of America every year, according to their estimate, no less a sum than £200,000,000 in the shape of emigrants; and our own colonies crying, 'Emigrate! Emigrate! Emigrate!' and this cry is the only thing they can do to promote or divert the wave of emigration from the Atlantic shores to those of British colonies.

"Why refuse to dip into the colonial treasury for such a profitable and recuperative purpose? Land and revenue spent in this way would tend more to give power, wealth, and influence to the colonies than thousands of regiments and scores of ironclads.

"Mr. Macfie, M.P., says, 'the great problem to be solved is how to

direct the flow of emigration so that it should replenish the colonies. Again he says, 'a first condition and requirement of any satisfactory solving of the problem is that the connection of the colonies with the mother-country must be recognised and dealt with as permanent and indissoluble.'

"Well, what is to be done in order to bring about this desirable state of things? The condition to this end is that the unoccupied culturable waste lands shall be held in trust by the executive of the Colonial or Imperial Government, for the benefit of all further settlers, as well as those already settled, including the aborigines, to be distributed in just and sound proportions, as exemplified by the 'Homestead Law of America.'

"In passing this code, let all previous laws relating to waste lands in the colonies, which put a value of £1 per acre, be repealed, as having been tried and found utterly wanting. We shall then have a bond of peace which only requires to be complete and perpetual by the addition of perpetual Free Trade, both intercolonial and international; we shall then have 'established some real advantages that will make it manifest and palpable that there is more than sentiment and glory (military) to hold the nation together, we shall then and not till then 'encourage the settlement in the colonies of our nobles and men of position and education, especially those whose virtue and persevering industry have made for themselves a high position.'

"Just contemplate for a moment the vast wealth poured into the lap of America every year in the shape of labour, skill, and capital—i.e., we give them, as mentioned above, emigrants to the tune of nearly 200,000 every year. What does this amount to, according to President Lincoln's own estimate?—£200,000,000, which is sufficient to rebuild the metropolis of England. How long would it take to make Oueens-

land a great and powerful nation at this rate?

"But you may say that Queensland has already got a Homestead Law. Granted, but it is not on the exact pattern of the American one; it is weighted with conditions not thought of there, and there is still that ugly lie attached to it in Queensland, which tends to frighten from all British colonies that independent emigrant who possesses capital and skill—viz., that every acre granted is equal to granting £1 sterling.

"Free Trade in land would be for the colonies what Free Trade in corn was for England—viz., a relief of industry from the shackles of a legal monopoly, which had been for years grinding the face of

the poor.

When this is effected, all the rest will follow in the nature of things.

ngs.
"Yours truly,
"T. BRIGGS.

<sup>&</sup>quot;To A. Roche, Esq.,
"Hon. Sec. Royal Colonial Institute."

"By way of ventilating this important question, allow me to hand you" for publication a copy of a letter sent to Governor Weld soon

after he took his place as Governor of Western Australia.

"To His Excellency the Governor Weld, Western Australia.—May I be allowed to approach your excellency with a few suggestions contained in a short pamphlet sent by this post for your excellency's perusal? I am sure when it is made known to your excellency that no less than 60,000 new farms were carved out of the wild prairie or wilderness in the United States during the year 1869 by virtue of the Homestead Law, you will not hesitate to inaugurate such a law for the benefit of the whole British family no less than for all classes of society in your colony.

"Is it not a startling fact that 60,000 families can find a welcome in an enemy's country, and a Homestead Law which is denied to them in Britain's own colonies? Is this fact alone not sufficient to alienate the affections of those who have been so alienated in material wealth and comfort? The time and opportunity afforded your excellency for inaugurating a policy in Western Australia in regard to the alienation of waste lands imposes upon you a responsibility most

tremendous to contemplate.

"If a wrong policy be adopted in a new country to commence with, your excellency knows better than your humble servant that the ramifications of vast and complex interests are vested, and society itself is built on a rotten foundation, as wrong begets wrong, until nothing short of a revolution can put matters right—Ireland at this moment to wit.

"Your colony has been in existence a longer period than the colony of Queensland; yet the latter has multiplied its population fourfold in the nine or ten years it has been established. It is now upwards of 100,000, whereas yours only counts a little over 20,000

souls.

"This fact is accounted for in the nature of the Land Laws. Queensland having found the system of free grants to be a sound policy, has, during the year 1869, passed another law, much nearer to the Homestead Law of America; and already it is beginning to attract the most thrifty farmers from the old colony of New South Wales.

"I would refrain from further remarks until I hear from your excellency. I represent no party in politics; I only seek the common good, and would accept it from whatever party may be pleased to give it whenever possession of power may afford them an opportunity to do so. Finally, let me say that I am impressed with the confidence in your excellency being able to appreciate the following motto, viz.:— 'Agriculture is the mother of manufacture and commerce. Manufacture'and commerce are twin sisters, and Free Trade is their hand.

<sup>\*</sup> The editor of the Bee-Hive.

maiden.' And may the spirit of him who sayeth, 'A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine,' be the guiding hand in marking out a land policy under your excellency's rule.—I have the honour to remain, your excellency's obedient servant,

"THOMAS BRIGGS.

"The Homestead, Richmond, Surrey, S.W., Feb. 17, 1870."

It has been stated on good authority that there are to be found in Western Australia in abundance trees "tall and stately, the stem being frequently seventy feet in height before branching." It is known by Americans and Europeans by the name of Native Mahogany, but the natives call it Jarrah, but the scientific name he says is Enclyptus

marginota.

defines decay, time, weather, the white ant, and the destructive sea-worms, and the Teredo navalis, have no effect upon it." Now, if this be a true description, we have here (as if Providence had especially provided for us) a way out of that difficulty which has so retarded the making of railways in India, viz., a timber for sleepers that the white ant cannot destroy. Why have we not utilised this bountiful gift of Providence?

My answer is simply the old story, "The want of a sound Homestead Law, by which those thrifty emigrants who land in America at the rate of 200,000 every year may be attracted to our Colonies, in

addition to all those sent in forma pauperis."

#### CHAPTER X.

## HOW FAR OUGHT TAXATION TO BE DIRECT, OR INDIRECT?

"The most important distinction of taxes seems to be taxes which hinder industry, and taxes which do not hinder industry. All other distinctions are secondary to this. A tax is not mischievous for what it orders to be paid, so much as it hinders from being produced."—Professor Newman.

"Taxes on exchange, and on the transactions of society, are of a most odious nature. The smallest trifle so paid is a subtraction from actual property. Taxes ought to be for the preservation of property, not to prevent its formation."—M. Turgor.

NE of the objects of this chapter is "the diffusion of sound principles on all questions of political and social economy." Who can imagine a more important question than that of taxation?

Taxation as it is, and taxation as it ought to be, shall be my main object; and in placing before you the true state of the case, I may have to make some very startling announcements, some strange facts and figures, which have been overlooked by most of our modern professors of political economy.

"There may be danger in telling these facts to the people, but

there is more danger now in keeping them in ignorance."

Statesmen of the calibre of Cobden, Peel, Huskisson, Bright, and Ternart have died out, and another generation has arisen, who know not the importance of entire Free Trade. It is true that Mr. Bright is still living; but by accepting office without stipulating for the people's "Free Breakfast-Table," he has, so to speak, committed political suicide, and stultified the whole of his useful labours of former days in the cause.

It is also true that Tennant is still living, but we regret to say, from ill-health and old age, we fear his work will end with the magnificent work called the 4th Edition of his "People's Blue Book," which, after a careful reading, I must confess is the ablest work on taxation and political economy ever written. It carries the reader into higher regions than mere statistical or arithmetical figures; it is essentially a Christian work, and so very unselfish and impartial that one would almost imagine it to be Divinely inspired.

By the fluctuation of some, and by the apparent permanent advance in the price of most, of the prime necessaries and comforts of life, the people are beginning "to sniff the famine from afar;" and once let the masses be educated, they will surely find then that that famine which has been brought about by bad fiscal laws ought to fall upon the makers of those laws in the same measure as it falls upon the masses themselves. They will then find out that they are being robbed by these laws of at least one-third of their wages.

When they are aware that the present fiscal system not only makes them bear the chief burden of taxation, but also robs them of one-third of the fruits of their labour, over and above what goes into the coffers of the revenue, and does no good to any class, they will no doubt find

a way how to bring about the remedy.

One of the most pernicious effects of the indirect mode of taxation is that the taxpayer is relieved of his cash without knowing it at the moment, and yet this is boasted of by modern statesmen as being a very clever mode of operation. No doubt it is; and a pickpocket would think the same of himself after he had extracted your purse

without your knowing it.

"Of all rebellions that of the belly is the worst. The law can do little to quiet that. What will prevent a starving people from doing mischief? The law does sometimes restore order, but never did restore trade," unless by repealing bad laws, on the principle of laissez faire, to wit, the repeal of the Corn Laws. Trade in all countries is regulated by a universal law; but a disregard of that universal law, involves the disruption of social order, and that lets in civil war, and its attendant famine, with many other vicious conscquences, which the strongest only would survive. The weak must perish then; they may be innocent, but if ignorant, their innocence will not save them in the general crash, for in this world suffering is a consequence of ignorance ("People's Blue Book," page 677).

The word equality is one that is as much abused as that of independence. "There can be no equality;" the nearest approach that we can ever hope to make to it is justice. In this way we may approximate to it, but must ever be at an immeasurable distance from

it, and our approach to it can never be through trades unions.

But towards it we have not yet taken the first step. "To say that the strong shall be brought down to the level of the weak is as great an absurdity as to say that the weak shall be lifted up to the level of the strong. It is very like finding fault with the Creator's work, and pretending to correct it. And yet it is this that our trades unions are trying to do. Unhappily for us all, this ignorant mistake has arisen out of a no less ignorant mistake of our Imperial legislature, i.e., the fiscal mistake. If the trades unions knew how to state their case properly, they would be invincible. They complain of injustice. In that they are quite right. But they are very ignorant, and in their ignorance they commit a much greater injustice against themselves and others than that of which they complain. Being born with a constitution and physical and mental powers of some sort, and having no other property, they are obliged to work for wages, that is, to let themselves our for hire; but the law (fiscal laws), in which they have

had no voice in the making, takes away from them at least onethird of their wages, or what is the same thing, makes them pay in that proportion an increased price for all that is necessary for their existence, in eating, drinking, clothing, and housing. These laws, therefore, to that extent, make them forced labourers, or slaves, for the benefit of those who, having property, are not obliged to work for wages. This is as manifest an injustice in principle and in practice, in fact and in effect, as to demand ten hours' pay for nine hours' labour."

Those who are deluded into this folly are to be pitied; but their ignorance will not save them. "By a law of nature they must suffer." By a law of nature all people, all nations, who violate natural laws in

making their fiscal laws, must suffer.

It is far beyond the limits of this book to describe the hundredth part of the evidences of mischief resulting from indirect taxation. Every time our Chancellor of the Exchequer brings out his Budget in its present shape, he declares war against society at home and abroad. When he puts a duty on tea, he practically sends a blight over the tea-gardens of China and India, to the extent and destruction of 123 millions of pounds of tea. This is equal to the annual home consumption of Britain. What would be thought of the Chinese Government if they could, and did, send to our country countless clouds of locusts to eat up half of our harvest just as it was about to ripen? And yet we allow our own Chancellor of the Exchequer to inflict this curse upon the Chinese, only because we are ignorant of the effect it also has upon ourselves. Ultimately our own people suffer just as much as they do. The same may be said with regard to coffee. When our Chancellor of the Exchequer took off one-half of the coffee duty, the effect (as wired from the West Indies and Ceylon coffee plantations) would be to add to the annual value of the productive powers of their soil to the extent of 40s. per acre at least. This is evidence of the moral and fiscal locusts, and what the effects of removing them would be, not only on the interests of producers, but the consumers at home also. Here is evidence of what indirect taxes hinder from being produced.

When the Chancellor of the Exchequer pronounces from his place in Parliament the continuance of the Malt Duty, he practically declares war upon Ireland, and, in fact, against the whole of the population of Britain, but especially against Ireland, inasmuch as Ireland is principally an agricultural country. How is this proven? In the following observations:—In 1868 a Select Committee of the House of Commons received evidence from some eminent agriculturists, which was endorsed by them in their Report, to the effect that, "if the malt duty were repealed, butchers' meat could be produced at least 2d. per pound cheaper for the whole of the United Kingdom." Twopence

<sup>\*</sup>For details see back, page 70, letter to the Times.

per pound is about 25 per cent. on the wholesale price, and the consumption being upwards of eighty millions for the United Kingdom, and 25 per cent. on eighty millions being twenty millions sterling, it follows as a matter of fact that twenty millions sterling is wasted and lost to the people, in order to raise a revenue of under seven millions by the malt duty. But this is not all; it is estimated that there are eighteen millions of the sons and daughters of Britain eighteen years of age and over, and if we only allow half a pint of wholesome beer to dinner and half a pint to supper each, but for the malt duty this pint of beer could be had for a penny, leaving 100 per cent. profit to the brewer and retailer, instead of which they cannot get it under twopence or threepence; this again robs the people of twenty-seven millions. the malt duty alone is responsible for taking out of the people's hard earnings no less a sum than forty-seven millions of money, besides the cost of collection, in order to put into the coffers of the revenue a paltry seven millions sterling.

Again, a very eminent agriculturist, H. Nield, Esq., of Wortley, Lancashire, writes in the *Manchester Courier*, August 21st, 1872, under the head "Butcher's Meat: How Farmers can Increase Supplies":—
"I, together with many of the breeders and feeders of stock, believe the present comparatively' high prices of meat affect ourselves as consumers equally with the general public, and the agitation upon so important a question is by no means an unreasonable one. It is a great mistake to conclude that high prices result in large profits to producers. The true source of profit to a farmer is abundant supplies with moderate prices. I venture a confident opinion, confirmed by practical experience, that one grievous obstacle to a more abundant and cheaper supply of beef, mutton, and dairy produce is the impolitic and unjust tax upon malt, which in fact is a tax upon labour,

for the tax is levied during the operation it undergoes.

"Myself and others know, by practical experience, that beef, mutton, milk, &c., can be produced more abundantly by a liberal use of malt as a condiment with other food than by anything else. In confirmation of this, I refer to the appendix to the Parliamentary Committee's Report on the Malt tax, 1868."—For details, see page 70.

The beasts fed with the malt left a good profit, and the others a

large loss.

Equally convincing facts with reference to sheep, &c., can be adduced, and still the tax upon malt disgraces our laws and oppresses the people. I venture to state that when we can have fair free trade in untaxed malt and beer, many thousands of pounds now annually wasted by farmers on spurious compounds—cake and feeding stuffs—will be saved, and go to augment the meat supply of the country; and give, in addition, security to the farmer for the capital he has embarked, and freedom in his cultivation. Only let him have fair play in his race of competition with the untaxed foreigner, and then you will have found the true way of making meat cheaper, and producers and consumers contented.

Now, these are startling figures, and if true (which I am satisfied they are, or rather under the mark than over), it is high time for the people of this country, and, in fact, all countries, to begin to think for themselves on such matters.

M. Turgot, in his "Fragmentary Tracts," says, after some observations about indirect taxation on articles of consumption:—"Taxes, in whatever form they may be levied, fall eventually on the landowner."

-P. B. B., p. 758.

I now proceed to treat of "Taxation as it ought to be."

This is a very simple question, and will, therefore, take but a short

time compared to that of "Taxation as it is."

It having been demonstrated that the present system of indirect or mixed taxation causes a loss and cost to the people of £177,633,970, in order to secure a net revenue of £67,249,229, which two sums, added together, make £244,883,199 per annum; it having been also demonstrated that direct taxation involves only a cost of about one million, or 1½ per cent., in collection. And, moreover, we have the best authority (which has never been refuted) for the fact that, "in whatever way taxes are levied, direct or indirect, the owner of the soil eventually pays them all; and that the cost and loss entails a burden under the present system of £177,630,970, in addition to the net revenue—how can they (the landowners) be so infatuated as to tolerate so suicidal a policy?

"So intimately connected are the interests of trade and agriculture, that they may be taken as concurrent; for all experience shows that a state of prosperity, or depression in the one is the same in the other. It therefore can need no words to prove that, by relieving trade from all taxes or other impositions or impediments, no injury can there-

by be inflicted on land."

By reference to the "People's Blue Book," page 347, the author recommends a plan for the carrying out of a sound system of taxation:—"1st, a tax on property of a certain defined description; 2nd, a tax on persons, or houses, of a certain defined class; and 3rd, all other state taxes to be abolished."

Passing over details as too long for the limits of this chapter, and

coming to page 357, the summary of revenue is as follows:—

Property-tax, 1	(26.061.121							
realised p	house	y boldow	- +	f	···			2,30,001,525
rersonal, or	nouse	noider	s tax,	irom	£1 to	£10	per	
family .					• • • •	• • •		34,500,000
Post-office .				•••	• • •			4,671,230
Telegraph serv							•••	100,761
Crown lands .			•••	• • •	• • •	•••		447,723
Miscellaneous		•••	•••	•••	•••	•••	• • • •	3,205,253

£,78,986,492

Deduct Post-office Deduct Telegraph service	•••		•••	£4,671,230 100,761	
					4,771,991
Total revenue	•••	•••	•••		£74,214,501

exclusive of Post-office and telegraph service, which he considers as illegitimate sources of revenue, although this point would be conceded

if the voice of the people were against it.

If exception be taken to these estimates on the ground that they are too high; or if a larger revenue must be raised for the requirements of the State, this involves only the simple question of the rate per cent. to be levied on the realised property of the kingdom. This is "Taxation as it ought to be," and when shall we have a Chancellor of the Exchequer who is wise enough and courageous enough to adopt it?

It may be admitted that it would be a great political revolution, and also a social one in our country, which would be gradually extended over the whole civilised world. But if the principle be sound in truth and justice, how can the results be other than beneficial to

the whole human race?

Having endeavoured to lay before you the facts as clearly as possible, I appeal, in the name of common sense, to my readers and to the people of England, as they value the well-being of their common country, as they value the happiness of our common humanity, to take this question in hand, and not to let it drop until we have the "Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill;" to take this question and let it be paramount to all other questions for agitation throughout the length and breadth of the land. I endorse every word I have read in the "People's Blue Book," although I admit that, before I read it, I was a strong advocate for general income tax on the "percentage principle," yet I must now admit that I am converted by downright logical argument and sound reasoning. am wrong, it is for objectors to prove how and where I am wrong, Failing this, it is the duty of every citizen of Great Britain, irrespective of religious or political creeds, to urge on their members of Parliament the bringing of this question to the fore.\*

It is quite evident that if the rich and upper classes were taxed after the proportion of 15 per cent. on their entire income as the working-men are, only taking two or three articles of their special

<sup>\*</sup>Although Mr Lowe had these statements put into his hands, before making his speech at Glasgow, by the Lord Provost, he has not only ignored the arguments and declined to combat them, but he has done that which amounts to a disregard of the principles of the Free Breakfast-Table for the people, viz., entered into another French Treaty of Commerce without consulting Parliament.

consumption, they would not endure it a day without that sort of clamorous agitation and literally storming the Houses of Parliament, by which means only at the present time reform, or justice even, can There would be a combination amongst them, well be obtained. organised, that would have no nay-no talk of a more convenient season to do right and justice, and the swell, and bluster, and persistence would know no abatement till the end was obtained. It must be on this kind of united action amongst the working classes of this kingdom that direct taxation—and which means just taxation can be obtained by them. I must confess that there is but little hope for this great national reform of taxation, until there is some general calamity that will preforce open the eyes of the working-men to the perception of the wrong, injustice, and ruinously-stupid system of collecting the taxation through the consumption of the mouths of the people. There is but little hope until the people unite and adopt or frame some such petitions as the following, and send them to Parliament by thousands, signed by hundreds of thousands, to wit :--

"The earnest petition of the undersigned showeth :-

"I. That your petitioners consider the principle involved in indirect taxation at variance with public and international justice, and

therefore antagonistic to the peace and prosperity of nations.

"2. That your petitioners consider it both unjust and impolitic to enhance by taxation the cost of tea, coffee, malt, wine, beer, and tobacco: unjust because it creates a costly, artificial barrier between the public and those bounties of nature which custom and climate have rendered necessaries of life, and thus imposes upon the productive forces of the nation an unnecessary burden which, in the present and protective state of foreign competition, they ought not to bear. Impolitic, because it exposes the nation to the charge of selfishness, or of fiscal inconsistency, because it affords to opponents of Free Trade in other countries and in our own colonies a plausible, if not a powerful argument in favour of protection: and because it prevents the establishment in Ireland of what might prove the best political anodynes, an important and profitable branch of industry.

"3. That apart from the question involved in the term 'necessaries of life,' which to the practical statesman must be construed to mean whatever is largely consumed by the public, your petitioners are of opinion that Free Trade in beer under proper regulations as to hours of sale would greatly tend to promote the cause of temperance

and sobriety.

"4. That your petitioners consider the time favourable for the full development of that policy of commercial freedom which, even in its incomplete stage, has done so much for the prosperity of the country. And they humbly hope that your Honourable House will take steps for the early consideration of the whole question, with a view of substituting Direct for Indirect taxes, and especially of removing from the commodities specified those fiscal burdens which,

though comparatively small, press so heavily upon the poor man's table and the springs of industry, and which affect so banefully the highest interests of the nation.

"And your petitioners will ever pray."

I do not suggest that the above petition should be adopted verbally. but as the basis of the thing required: meantime the working-menelectors should remember that they have it already in their hands tomake their voice heard in Parliament, by not voting for any candidate who will not distinctly pledge himself to the policy of substituting direct for indirect taxation. These should therefore be careful to avoid sending greedy and hungry place-hunting barristers and military and naval officers, all of whom are equally interested in keeping up a reck-\ less and enormous expenditure. As a specimen how the taxes of the working-people are spent by Parliaments composed chiefly of such very honourable gentlemen—for of course they are all honourable men. -I need only quote from a speech of Mr. Trevelyan, M.P., at Hawick, January 9th, 1872. He said :- "In the year when William IV. came to the throne, we spent only £570,000 upon law and justice. first year of the reign of Victoria we spent £1,040,000 upon them; in 1848, £1,900,000; in 1858, £3,000,000; and in 1869, £4,600,000; so that our expenses on law and justice are now nine times more than they were at the begining of the reign of William IV.

"The reason of this was that under the heading of law and justice was gathered together all the jobbery of the day. In other days people obliged their political friends by granting them monopolies and sinecure

offices.

"These days could no longer give sinecure and monopolies, but our Government could make people county-court judges, two for every one that was required, registrars, taxing-masters, clerks of assizes, &c., and give innumerable incomes of £1,200, £1,500, and £2,000 a year all under the heading of 'law and justice.'

"The consequence was that the great families now, instead of, as in the old days, sending their younger sons into Parliament for the sake of getting a fat sinecure, made them lawyers in order that at the age of two or three and thirty they might marry comfortably on what

was not a sinecure but a semi-sinecure of £2,000 a year."

The hon, member then proceeded to mention a number of half-sinecure offices in the Court of Chancery; and that every two or three-years we had a complete revision of the Bankruptcy Laws, and whenever they were revised all the lawyers who used to be engaged under the old system were pensioned off on their old salaries, and a rew set of lawyers put in to carry on the new system. He said:—"At this moment the land perfectly swarms with commissioners and registrars of bankruptcy, who are out of work, but not out of wages. If the legal authorities had been thinking only of the interests of the public and not of the interests of their own class, as soon as a county court fell vacant they would have appointed one of these legal gentlemen who had

nothing to do. Instead of doing so they appointed a new person at

an expense of £1,500 to £2,000 a year to the public."

The only means of remedying all this was not that individual members of Parliament should quarrel with particular items of expenditure, but that the country should take the matter up and say, "We will not give our confidence to a Government that cannot do the business of the country for less than sixty millions a year."

Thus we go on, and the total expenditure is now seventy-seven millions of money, and the growth of the plundering under what may be called pettifogging "law and justice" items has developed during the reign of our Gracious Queen from £1,040,000 to £13,309,000!\*

Surely it is high time the political schoolmaster was abroad. What we require at the present time especially, is a stream of honest John Bull candour and outspoken utterance in condemnation of such political delinquencies as those stated above as a specimen of the plundering of the public by the upper classes. The sooner this becomes great and earnest the better for all classes of the nation. When the fountain-head is corrupt, what can be expected from the rivulets that flow therefrom? If the Government continues to sustain itself by ill-gotten and unjust revenue, how can it be expected that the governing classes will be respected by the wise and virtuous? When the people are politically educated so as to be able to see that from the moderate and necessary consumption of two articles alone, of the poor man's necessaries he is made to pay what is equivalent to a 15 per cent. income-tax, it will be high time—and perhaps too late—for the governing classes to look about them, for they may be walking amongst dynamite substances under their feet, or what, in general, may be characterised as a moral, social, and political volcano.

Turgot has said:—"The reflection of those who have mastered the subject, confirmed by experience, shows them clearly that the whole burden of taxation, in whatever form it is first raised, when traced through all its ramifications, falls eventually on the owners of the soil." From this citation some persons have jumped to the conclusion that Turgot held the theory that both the trader and the labourer are able to shift their part of the burden, which, therefore, ultimately rests

upon the only tangible and fixed property—the land.

This theory may be Smith's or Stuart Mill's, but it is not, as far as I recollect, that of Turgot, as the following passage will show:—
"Industry should not be interrupted by indirect taxes in its struggle to create wealth, but that the revenue of the country ought to be raised from realised property direct." It is clear that Turgot held that to tax industry in its operation, either in production or exchange, or distribution of wealth, is wrong and hurtful to trade and commerce, and that which is so must be eventually hurtful to agriculture, and, therefore, to the landholder.

<sup>\*</sup> It has now (1882) swelled to the dimensions of 16 millions.

The shame that attaches itself to our modern economists lies in the fact that they have nearly all of them looked on with the utmost indifference, or given the authority of their great reputations to the sanction of what they call a mixed system of taxation—viz., partly direct and partly indirect; in other words, they have not sufficiently denounced the whole system of Customs and Excise; consequently, they being estimated as great lights, have degraded themselves to the functions of blind leaders of the blind. All really intelligent and honest-minded men know that taxing commodities is hurtful to all classes.

This system is prolific of misery, wretchedness, wastefulness, and injustice, rendering it necessary to waste £,177,000,000 in order to put £,70,000,000 into the Exchequer. This is a gigantic evil and stupid wrong which would not be endured if the people were wise. It is the fruitful cause of all sorts of evil, personal, social, and commercial; affecting the body politic in all its limbs like a distressing nightmare. To raise the Imperial revenue by taxing commodities is of all bad ways the very worst, and at the same time the most costly. The direct way and the only wise one is to levy the revenue from all realised property, by which is meant all that sort of property which yields its owner an annual and continuous income without his or her personal efforts or risk, such as rent from lands, houses, gardens, mortgages, and dividends from funds, &c. The results of this method have been already stated in a definite form several times in these pages, and notably so in what the public press has designated "Briggs' Model Budget."

### CHAPTER XI.

## ADULTERATION OF FOOD, &C.

GOVERNMENT and the working classes generally, in their endeavour to cure the evils of society, adopt every conceivable remedy but the right one.

THAT we have during the last few years been suffering from what has been shrewdly called famine prices in some of the necessaries of life, is beyond question. The beginning of this phase of our social and manufacturing existence commenced when we were deprived of the American cotton-supply, which produced national loss to a tremendous extent, combined with great social suffering. Famine prices of coal, meat, and dairy produce have followed and are still rampant, causing considerable suffering and loss, and with a depressed export trade and a still lowering market, they are likely to be felt speedily in a more distressing degree. Despite this condition, and the prospect of going from bad to worse, our legislature seem perfectly indifferent to the great peril of the nation, and stupidly oblivious of the only real and legitimate remedy for the evils, that of perfect free trade, secured by the total abolition of all Customs and Excise duties. The general spirit of that House that we falsely call the Commons is one that delights to meddle and muddle, and, like itinerant tinkers, make a bad job with one hole, and make two or three for future tinkering.

We have had several witnesses examined before the Parliamentary Committee on the coal question, the result of whose evidence goes to prove that there are many and various causes at work, some direct, others collateral or indirect. It is our purpose to speak of the latter, inasmuch as the direct causes are palpable to all, whereas the col-

lateral causes are unseen even by our great statesmen.

For instance, we had Mr. Lowe, at the annual dinner of the Institute of Civil Engineers, making the following eloquent remarks:—
'Let not the warlike utterances of your chairman lead you from the task before you. Let nobody persuade you to take the laurel and cast aside the olive. The field in which your triumphs have been won, and in which they will be won, elevates you to the position of the noblest profession in the world, inasmuch as your efforts annihilate time and space, render the entire world pervious to man, and make the whole of mankind one family."

But, alas! little did those worth engineers think that, whilst hewas pouring into their ears these beautiful sentiments, he had, probably, written out a declaration of war upon them, and especially their more humble brethren, in the shape of a Budget, which deprives them of one-third of their wages without giving fair value for them. Let us, for Charity's sake, assume that even he (Mr. Lowe) is ignorant of the tendency of these fiscal duties to create mountains, mud-ruts, insurmountable obstacles, and impediments in the way of their efforts to "annihilate time and space," the said mud-ruts rendering it impossible, also, to "make the entire world pervious to man, and tomake the whole of mankind one family." Can it be necessary in this nineteenth century to give reasons or produce evidence in support of this theory?

The successors of Cobden, Bright, Peel, &c., ought to be ashamed to ask it, especially in this manufacturing and commercial country, aspiring as we do to clothe the people of the whole world with textile fabrics, and to cover their roads with iron rails, locomotives, &c. The aim of the law is or ought to be, to prevent injustice from reigning; but when the law itself perpetrates injustice in taxing the people's food, how can it prevent injustice in the ranks of the people. To wit, the abortive efforts to prevent adulteration of food and drink.

Some evidence of the injustice of taxing food for Imperial revenue was given in a late issue of the *Bee-Hive*, in a speech headed a "Free Breakfast-Table," in which it is shown that an average-family of five persons, with £1 a week income, cannot live in comfort without spending 6s. 6½d. on taxed articles, and out of this only 1s. 1½d. reaches the coffers of the revenue; the cost of which articles, underastate of entire free trade, would only be 3s. 2d., in place of 6s. 6½d., so that privileged monopolists (or gin-palace owners), receive 3s. 4½d. from the taxpayers over and above a fair profit; out of which they hand over to the State revenue 1s. 1½d., keeping to themselves 2s. 3½d. out of the plunder, and this is the way that it creates famine-prices in the comforts and necessaries of life.

If this is not sufficient evidence of the injustice, immorality, and unsoundness of such a policy, let us look into the cupboards of the agricultural labourer, the widows and orphans, many of whom have been made so by "Rotten Ships," the owners of which have been exposed by Mr. Plimsoll. Let us also look into the cupboards of otherwidows and orphans a little higher up in society, say those left with a moderate fixed income; and also another very numerous class, commercial and other clerks with large families, who are not only taxed in this form, but also come under the lash of the (Lowe) income-tax as well; the case of this class is really a glaring case of spoilation.

If we need further evidence we can see it in the NEMESIS, such as the discontent in Ireland, whose people have to be kept quiet by planting 40,000 bayonets in their midst.

If further evidence be needed we see it in the strikes, the Land Tenure Reform Association, the anti-income-tax movements, the local taxation murmurs, and scores of other movements too numerous to mention now. We see it in the mass of pauperism and crime, and though last, not least, we see it in 200,000 of the best and thriftiest of our wealth-producing population seeking homes in foreign lands (not British colonies) for lack of profitable employment at home through the rotten fiscal laws, dwarfing as they do the growth of a profitable commerce, and, as a natural consequence, our agriculture also, and causing panics every nine or ten years which shake the very foundation of our commerce. These are the collateral or indirect causes and effects, which our statesmen will not see until forced upon them by an outside pressure. As regards coal, one firm of Lancashire manufacturers writes in the Manchester Courier, March 22nd, 1873. "Our total consumption being about 17,100 tons per annum of 300 working days, the difference in price to us since the famine began is £10,936 17s. 6d. for the year, which no fair trade can stand.

Are we to understand that if fair trade cannot stand it, that unfair trade must be resorted to? If so, will not the fiscal system, seeing that it is the cause of famine prices, account for a great amount of the adulteration so much complained of lately? We read in the papers the other day of some 300 to 400 tons of foreign fruit having been found alive with maggots and condemned, and supposed to have been destroyed. But we can see plenty of this said rubbish exhibited for sale in the back slums, where the very poor people spend their money in such luxuries. Here is another consequence of Custom House meddling, in the way of creating mud-ruts, &c., intervening to tax food on its way from the soil to the mouth. We also read of a ship-load of tea sold by auction at from \(\frac{1}{2}\)d. to \(\frac{3}{2}\)d. per lb., on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer received 6d. per lb. duty, and then let it go amongst the poor, thus rendering the law an "accessory before the fact" to the poisoning of the people; at the same time extorting 2,400 per cent. profit on the poor people's consumption of that article.

It is not easy for a man of feeling and honesty to write or read without indignation of such enormous wrong as this. To levy sixpence per pound on vile and rotten tea not worth a halfpenny, and thus be the direct means of foisting a poisonous article on the poor, is a greater crime than those for which many men have died the death of the infamous on the gallows. Our network of laws, written and conventionally "common," make loopholes for enormous rascally sharks to escape without let or hindrance, but catch the small fish to fry alive, and insult the Eternal by wiping their mouths and saying, "I have done no harm." They give the lie to the divine utterance,

"Righteousness exalteth a nation."

In this country, and for its manufacturing interests, coal is a primary necessary of national life, and too much enlightened attention

cannot be given to it. I say enlightened attention, for this, like many other subjects, is by no means of that character, or the working millions of the commonwealth would not be from time to time the victims of injustice and famine prices.

The man, or the set of men, who made coal cheap in England won for her an empire; on the other hand, the man, or set of men,

who made coal dear in England lost it again.

Under these circumstances can we be surprised to find hugebrewers and distillers dying worth four to five millions sterling.

As regards the trade disputes there are three parties to be considered in the matter, viz., the public, the labourer, and the capitalist; the first of the three has invariably been ignored in all the disputes

between the other two.

Mr. Edmund Ashworth, in the height of the coal famine, said :-"The price of coal is only one amongst a large number of other articles made artificially dear by the protection and monopoly of a. trade union which controls for a time the cost and quantity produced." Now, what is coal? It is one of the prime necessaries of life; yea, but it is more—it is, when cheap, the main link in the chain of England's greatness, her prosperity. It is not only coal, but cheap coal, that we have to consider in taking into account the well-being of the whole people. It puts in motion myriads of little labourers called spindles, tended by hundreds of thousands of our industrious population, in order that they shall clothe the whole human race. It puts in motion the steam horse on the iron road, and the ship that goes tothe uttermost parts of the globe with tidings of peace, and joy, and gladness, saying, "Here is England's superabundance; give us in exchange some of yours." But once let it be a settled question that coals are to be no longer cheap in England, from that day the downfall of England's greatness is a settled question. Again Mr. Ashworth says, "People complain of dear coal; but who produced it? The people themselves, through their representatives in Parliament. us see what is the cost of this foible. It affects every family in. England, and they will each continue to pay a quota towards the tradeunion tax. The output of coal in Great Britain in 1872 was 115,500,000 Suppose we allow one-third the export to be to our coaling stations abroad, it leaves 107,000,000 tons to be paid for by the British public, and taking the increased price to be 8s. per ton, we have the enormous cost of £42,000,000 sterling as the increased tax on our shoulders every year, in obedience to the powers of the union, aided by the executive of the Amalgamated Association of Miners. men are not to be blamed for this; they have only availed themselves. of the privileges which Parliament placed before them." We endorse every word of this, and, indeed, think it far from being exaggerated; but more on this point hereafter. In fact he might have gone on tosay that coal is of no value whilst it remains in the bowels of the earth, and that it is only a thing of value when brought to the surface

by the labour and skill of the men employed, and that in consequence of the strike of 60,000 colliers, assuming their day's work to be three tons each, and that they were out three months, or 13 weeks, the loss to the State or Commonwealth would be, in round numbers, fourteen million tons at say 10s. per ton, seven millions sterling. This is a startling price to pay for a little petty quarrel between capital and labour, to say nothing of the misery, want, and starvation on the part of the latter, and the hatred, the anxiety, and vexation engendered

and perpetuated between them by their own suicidal folly.

Capital and labour are twin brothers; manufacture and commerce are also twin sisters; agriculture is the mother of them all, and free trade is their handmaiden. The common enemy to this happy family is the fiscal system, which interposes legal obstacles to prevent the mutual interchange of services. Science and art pour out the elements which a bountiful Providence has given gratuitously to mankind. Geology teaches us where coal, iron, and other minerals may be found; mineralogy shows us their constituents. Geography teaches us the natural distribution of the various materials of industry. Botany and zoology are concerned in the production of our food-stuff and textile fabrics. To mechanical science we owe the triumphs of modern engineering skill; chemistry, with all-pervading power, transforms the raw material of nearly every manufacture; electricity enables us to communicate like the lightning flash with the farthest rends of the earth; and, though last, not least, the coal produces the steam wherewith we save human and horse labour in the process of moving ponderous masses of material wealth. Our enterprising merchants and manufacturers are racking their brains to find ways and means to bring nations and peoples into easier intercourse with each other, and amongst other things invented international exhibitions of their various articles of commerce and agriculture. Yet they have hitherto failed to see the absurd and stupid inconsistency of their fiscal laws preventing them at every point, and converting those very exhibitions into nothing better than gigantic advertising machines for the benefit of a handful of men at the cost of the rest of the community. When they started these exhibitions, without first abolishing Custom and Excise tariffs, they put the cart before the horse. Mr. Ashworth seems to be blind on this point, for he says, "When England adopted free trade and abolished all monopolies." &c., forgetting that England never did adopt free trade vet—she only half did it. There are still the malt, the brewing, the tea, the coffee, cocoa, wine, spirit, and tobacco monopolies, all of which are still hanging like a millstone round the necks of capital and labour.

"Man in his nature is a monopolist—God has made him so for some beneficent end; why, then, should man make laws to foster and encourage monopoly, seeing that every man has been endowed with that selfish propensity by nature? It is like being dissatisfied with

God's work, and trying to mend it.

"If a multitude of councillors like our legislators fail to recognise a just appreciation of their duty, how can we expect the working-man—the son of toil, whose whole life is one battle with poverty, and whose highest ambition is to avoid dying a pauper—to find a better way of improving his condition than that of enhancing the amount of his wages by a strike? and that frequently leads to a lock-out, which aggravates the evil, and so the social anarchy develops itself until it becomes a national disaster.

"Now the question is, where does this dreadful evil originate? where is its root? Take away its root, and the social state will right

itself by a self-acting process.

"A collier's labour above all others is of a nature to demand short hours. There was printed in that issue of the 10th inst. an article headed, 'Coal-owners and Short Hours,' containing a suggestion which, if practicable (and it only requires a will to find a way to make it so), would solve the problem to the benefit of all the three interests concerned, viz., first, the public; second, the labourer; and third, the capitalist. If Mr. Pochin can prove by sound and logical argument that such a plan is impossible, then we shall believe that he is sincere in stating, although he has been unsuccessful in it, that 'one of the main purposes of his life has been to make the prime necessaries of life cheap.'

"We are delighted to find Mr. Pochin saying, 'If masters and workmen were to combine to make the first necessaries of life cheap, as it is the true interests of both to do, the purchasing power of the sovereign would be increased; and beyond this, the 20s. wages would become 25s., resulting from their power to supply to the world its first requirements.' We quite agree in this, and also the next paragraph, wherein he pictures the opposite result from a combination of masters

and men to make the prime necessaries of life dear.

"The existing state of things is now actually being developed to illustrate the truth of Mr. Pochin's picture of the stupid baker; for instance, wages and profits are diminishing all round, whilst the price of bread is rising; wheat has risen 7s. a quarter within the last fortnight or three weeks, and from the reports from Ireland it is not impossible that we may have another potato-famine as we had in 1845, as a judgment upon us for taxing the people's food, and as a reminder that the only remedy for that and other evils was found in repealing those taxing laws (in 1846, to wit, the Corn Laws) which operate in restraint of trade in a far more powerful way to make 'the prime necessaries of life dear' than all the trades-union strikes and lockouts ever could do. Bad as are the latter, they are only the offspring of the former.

"Reverting to Mr. Pochin's letter, he says of Lloyd Jones, 'He and his friends, when they had succeeded in reducing the labour of the collier one hour per day, without at the same time reducing his wages, represent to the workmen that they have secured an unmixed

good.' But he (Mr. P.), 'on the contrary, cannot but follow the coal so obtained to the houses of the working classes themselves, especially those of the poor; and I see, in consequence of the resulting dearness of coal, the smaller fire, the undried clothes, and the general misery that comes from the scarcity of this first necessary of life. Which course of action tends most to the general good I believe all thinking men of the present time have determined.'

"In a career of life consisting of fifty years of incessant labour and thought we have made this question the leading question of our life, and have determined that Mr. Pochin's 'course of action' is the right one, as far as it goes; but inasmuch as he ignores the root of the evil and only operates on a few twigs of the 'upas-tree,' leaving the trunk and the root to prosper more vigorously than ever, the question arises, would it not be better to leave it alone altogether than to prune it in this way, good as his intentions may be? Did Mr. Pochin ever follow in the same way as he followed the coal, the poor man's tea to the cottages from the ship, through the Custom House, where it gets adulterated; first, at the rate of 6d. a pound by Government tax, without giving value received; second, by the wholesale dealer putting his profit on that 6d., as well as on the first cost; and third, by the retail dealer doing the same, until when it reaches the consumer amongst the masses the price sometimes reaches 8s.per pound. As an illustration, we will relate what was told us by an eye witness, who says, 'Calling upon a friend (a grocer in the midst of a factory population), he (the friend) was engaged in making up penny packages of tea by weighing an ounce and dividing it into six penny packages.' The question was put, 'Do you do much in this way?' The answer was-about a thousand a year. Thus the poor factory girl has to pay 8s. per pound for the veriest rubbish under the name of tea, whilst Mr. Pochin can buy his chest of prime tea out of bond at about 3s. per pound, escaping all the heavy black-mail levied by the wholesale and retail dealers. But it does not stop here; in consequence of this hostile action upon John Chinaman's produce, he puts every obstacle in the way of adopting English produce, and thus there is created an obstacle to the natural growth and expansion of British commerce and manufacture, which militates against the interests of both employer and employed.

"Moreover, the evil does not stop here; a whole volume could be written without exhausting the catalogue of evils resulting from Customs and Excise taxes. Mr. Plimsoll's question about the rotten ships is one of the offsprings of this question. But for the obstacles in the way, as a result of these duties, ships would be able to secure profitable return freights or cargoes, and it would pay them better then to be honest than it does now to be dishonest, or otherwise as the case

may be.

"But Mr. Pochin will perhaps say that the poor man's bread is not taxed, which is the staff of life.

"Why, then, should the 4-lb. loaf be now 7½d., when twenty-five years ago wheat was the same price as now, but the 4-lb. loaf was only then 4½d.? It is evident the farmer is not the culprit, for the price of wheat is the same at both dates. Is the baker, or the miller, or the intermediate dealer to blame? No, it is the tax upon other commodities which accounts for it all. If Mr. Pochin will seek a seat in Parliament based upon the removal of this curse, we will pledge our honour he will get the support of the masses, as well as that of all right-thinking men; and then he will have the opportunity of bringing the question before the Legislature."

That the working millions of the kingdom have been made to

That the working millions of the kingdom have been made to bear the larger share of the taxation is explained easily by the fact that they hitherto have had no direct voice in making the law, and the majority of those who have professed to represent them have been notorious self-seeking tax-eaters. Our legislators have been all rich men, and they have legislated uniformly for the interest of their own order, and in supreme contempt of the interests of the very parties who have crowned them with the coveted honour of M.P. It may be safely affirmed that if there had been honest and just legislation between man and man, that enormous accumulation of capital that has been made during the present century, and which Mr. Gladstone declared at Liverpool two or three years since was greater than had been made from the time of Julius Cæsar up to the beginning of this century, would not have been substantially in the hands of one class.

## THE RAISING OF GOOD COTTON IN INDIA.

The following letter, addressed to the Times, relates to the question as to the possibility of raising cotton in India of a description to compete with the American, Egyptian, and Brazilian

production :-

"One of your correspondents says, 'India cannot compete with other countries in price and quality, and it were well if those interested in the cotton trade were to act upon this fact.' Again, 'What we want is not an additional million of bales from India, but an additional million of bales from Egypt and South America.' If I may be allowed to say a word in favour of India, I know of no reason why (except the want of irrigation) that country should not produce cotton as good as the Egyptian. Scinde, which is as much like Egypt as one florin is like another, has, by means of well irrigation and European skill, produced cotton quite equal in quality, according to the report of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, to anything produced in Egypt, and there is enough of waste land, waste labour, and waste water, in the countries drained by the Indus to produce several millions of bales. As to the quantity of waste land, the following figures are from official sources:—

Native States ... ...

Since ... ...

			Tot	al area in acres	Cultivated.		
Punjab	• • •	• • • •			47,062,400		14,470,185
Scinde				• • •	40,703,360	:	1,672,22)

"Of the population of these countries, the following is the last official return:—

Punjab and Native States connected with it—the former by census of 1855-56 ... ... ... ... ...

...

...

... ... ... 14,766,825 ... ... ... ... 7,154,538

24,421,363

"Of the great amount of waste labour in this population, some idea may be formed from the fact that the total exports from the Indus for the year ending April, 1863, amounted to £3,287,594 only, or something less than 3s. per head of population, one half of which was entirely due to the high price of cotton. The quantity of water running waste is 51,500 cubic feet per second when the river is at the lowest, which quantity, if it were never greater, would be equal to the irrigation of 9,270,000 acres throughout the year. As to the cost of irrigated cotton, I stated in a former letter that Scinde might be irrigated by means of high level canals at a capital cost of £3 10s. an acre. This is the estimate formed from ample data by one of our first hydraulic engineers. A charge of 25s. an acre for the water would give the canal owners 37½ per cent. net. At this charge for water, the cost of good cotton would be as under:—

					s.	a.	
Land tax, per acre	•••	• • •	• • •		3	7	
Water-rate	• • •	• • • •	• • • •	• • •	25	0	
Labour and seed	•••	• • •	***	• • •	25	0	
				-			
Total					<b>F</b> 2	~	

<sup>&</sup>quot;Produce 400 lbs., or a fraction over 11d. per lb.

"W. B."

Considering these things with honest impartiality I cannot refrain from saying that the representative men of Manchester have not acquitted themselves of late years in a manner that commands unqualified admiration. I have been an elector of Manchester for 40 years, and never yet found, until lately—say from 1860—the interests of Manchester so badly represented as they have been since that date. Mr. Birley we will not mention further than to say that he is too good a Conservative. Sir Thomas Bazley; what has he done? Has he fulfilled his promise to get us three millions of bales of cotton from India.

annually, so that we might have two strings to our bow-viz., India and America? Has he ever advocated in the House of Commons a land policy that would wed the labour of the rising generation of Indian ryots to the land, with a view to that end? Has he, or has Mr. Jacob Bright, ever made any effort in the House to carry out to its logical conclusion that beautiful policy inaugurated by that small band of men who, under the leadership of the late Richard Cobden and John Bright, fought the battle of Free Trade? Has Sir Thomas Bazley or Jacob Bright put forward a single effort to give the country a free breakfast, dinner, or supper-table? If they had done this, and done it successfully, then they would have been the true representatives of the "Manchester School" (that used to be), but alas! I fear Manchester has lost her Free Trade proclivities: hence she is content to be represented by "Rest and be thankful" M.P.'s. In the days when the Manchester people were looked up to, in a political sense, from "John a' Groat's House to Land's End," there was something like a public spirit in them, but now all seems changed. Local, personal, party, and sectional questions are only thought of. At that time the question was "The good of each is the good of all, and the good of all the good of each."

The man, or the set of men, who will carry the free breakfast, dinner, and supper-table policy, are the only ones to represent the true interests of society, and if Manchester return such men to Parliament she will retrieve her character, and her memory will rest on a higher pedestal than all the other constituencies in Great Britain and Ireland.

So great is the power of Manchester in all phases of life—in trade, commerce, manufacturing capacity, in practical skill, in wealth, and knowledge—that her strength to wage successfully civil, social, and political warfare on public grounds is beyond question and calculation. The only thing the city lacks is united will and purpose, but there, as elsewhere, the narrow policy of being absorbed in individual gain prevails to a sorrowful degree to the neglect of the gain of the public, which would result speedily in even greater personal advantage.\* Meanwhile, the iniquities of our fiscal system go on unchecked to the great injury of the people, and the affairs of India, China, and our Colonies are left with reckless neglect, though there is lying there the elements of untold wealth, waiting for the nation that first adopts Free Trade entire.

In 1870 a memorial was presented to the Government complaining of the slow progress in the development of the agricultural resources of India, containing suggestions which I for one cannot endorse, and which I will here lay before my readers:—

<sup>\*</sup> For instance, the cost to me personally, directly and indirectly, of the repeal of the Corn Laws was £500 or more; this was given for public good, and a better investment I never made for personal gain.

In the first place, the said memorial contains the following request to Government, viz., "To employ the collectors specifically for promoting and influencing the cultivation of cotton. This, I contend, is unsound in principle and dangerous in practice, and, in the nature of things, can never succeed, especially under existing circumstances: 1st. Because a tax-collector is not, as a rule, a fit and proper person to advise and instruct an agriculturist, they being almost universally (by virtue of their position) natural enemies. 2nd. Because he (the tax-collector) is in India considered by the natives generally to be the servant of a master who conquered their country, and who now holds their land in fee and their people in serfdom by the power of the sword, and as an illustration of this spirit even in higher classes of natives than the agriculturists, we have only to refer to the fact that only one per cent. of the railway stock and other public works is held by natives. It is, therefore, a great mistake to suppose that the collectors are "the officers who have power and influence necessary to secure real progress," even if they possess the requisite knowledge, and are willing to take the trouble to impart that knowledge to the natives, who seem determined to keep in the track of their forefathers. It will be well remembered by political thinkers of the day, that, prior to the repeal of the Corn Laws in this country, the agricultural mind of Great Britain was just as difficult to move out of the track that their forefathers had followed for generations. But having lost the so-called protection, we found that progress made rapid strides, and agricultural exhibitions and model farms were then, and not till then, appreciated as mediums of information and education for disseminating that knowledge which is necessary for the improvement of practical agriculture. It does, therefore, appear to me highly necessary that the same policy should be adopted with regard to India before we can expect to enlist the sympathies of the natives in the cause of agricultural progress. What Free Trade in corn did for England, Free Trade in the usufruct of land and all its produce will do for India; that middle class spoken of in the memorial will then find its way into the social system in India as it has done in America. If you wish to find evidence of the utter unfitness of the upper classes, both European and native, as a rule for the good government of India, you have only to look at the unjust, impolitic, and ignorant opposition they have brought to hear against the introduction of an income tax, more especially if it were introduced with the view of repealing all those taxes which act as impediments to the freedom of exchange of commodities, and thereby grievously oppress the poor by the contraction or the dwarfing of the field of honest employment of the people. The memorial "urges, with repeated and increased earnestness, the speedy construction of railways in the cotton districts, also that additional facilities for irrigation should be provided by means of loans, to be raised in this country." My readers will remember that such was the want of confidence in the lending world towards India, prior to the Government

policy of guaranteeing five per cent. upon railway capital expended on India, that no one would embark in loans for those enterprises. It would be needless to point out, therefore, that under such a system the country must necessarily suffer from limiting the operations and retarding the progress of the development of its resources. General Sir Arthur Cotton has recently read a paper, at the East India Association, which throws great light on this subject, and which ought to be printed and circulated.

The remark on the last page formed the substance of a letter on this matter to the *Manchester Courier*, and it called forth rejoinders from an anonymous person calling himself "Anglo-Indian." The importance of the subject induced me to amplify my remarks, and give two letters in reply to them, and as the matter is of immense gravity to the future condition of the cotton trade of England, no apology is

required for giving them verbatim :-

### "INDIAN COTTON SUPPLY.

## "To the Editor of the Manchester Courier.

"Sir,-In your issue of the 16th instant appears Letter No. 1, and on the 18th instant Letter No. 2, from a correspondent who signs 'Anglo-Indian,' criticising my letter of the 20th May (which appeared in your issue of the 25th May), commenting on the memorial of the Cotton Supply Association. I would not have troubled you with a rejoinder but for the importance of the subject. Your readers will see the importance of this question in the fact that, whilst the American supply is increasing, as it has done this year over last 83 per cent., our East Indian supply is decreasing 41 per cent. (see M'Haffie and Co.'s circular). I need not point out that such a state of things is fast drifting us into the same state of dependence upon the American cotton field that we were in before the American war brought upon us the dreadful cotton famine. It does not require a very far-seeing prophet to foretell another American war, springing out of the same cause which was the chief cause of the last-viz., high tariffs, but next time it will be south and west against north and east, unless such an event be put off by common agreement to strike a blow at stupid old England. Are we content to sit with our arms folded quietly looking on whilst another cotton famine overwhelms us with ten times more severity, if not permanent destruction, as the common manufacturers for the whole human family? Before going into the question, let me, on behalf of every true Englishman, thank 'Anglo-Indian' for taking up the question, and also your noble self, Mr. Editor, for the necessary space allowed for ventilating the question in your widely-circulated journal. I will pass over in silence the charge of ignorance against me, seeing that my principles are taken up, discussed, and endorsed by such old-experienced Indians as the editorial staff of the Asiatic. I regret that candour compels me to doubt the independent nature of 'Anglo-Indian's' fourteen years' experience in the cotton districts, and if 'A.-I.' had given his own name it would have gone far to clear up

that point.

"First, then, with regard to Mr. Briggs's first objection, 'A.-I.' says, 'The Cotton Supply Association do not wish the collectors of districts to undertake the work of encouraging the growth of a better description of cotton without extra assistance,' &c.; 'They have reason to know that the collectors themselves, if furnished with competent assistants,' &c. Did it not occur to 'A.-I.' that these are commonplace truths, and that the veriest clodhopper had no need to go to India for a day to get to know all about them, much less fourteen years? Moreover, a better description of cotton is not the only end (though a great one) to be aimed at. The same operations that produce quantity per acre-viz., irrigation, deep ploughing, and fertilisation, cannot fail to produce quality. Therefore, it is more to the purpose to get at a policy that will promote the universal application of irrigation, deep ploughing, and fertilisation, together with a good system of selecting and sorting the seed. I did not find fault with the recommendations of the collectors; what I did say was in effect that the policy of trusting solely and directly to Government wasteful agency for the development of agriculture for so vast and populous a country was 'unsound in principle and dangerous in practice.' This is a well-understood rule of law in economics. Adam Smith says, 'Where Government interferes in any kind of industry, private enterprise is sure to keep aloof.' Government interference (except where the industry is altogether convict labour) tends to destroy the freedom of individual action. Or it may be on the King's Highway for the safe and expeditious transmission of letters, persons, and property of each individual without respect of persons. Again, 'A.-I.' says, 'It is the only way in which we can ever look for an improvement in Indian agriculture. It is the collectors of India who have opened out the resources of the country.' My answer is that the resources of the country are not opened yet, therefore how can it be true that the collectors have done it? If this had been done, the Cotton Supply Association would have finished their work nobly, and would not now, at the end of fourteen or fifteen years' talking and printing. have to repeat over and over again, in the shape of memorials to the India Office, their A B C of a fallacious theory; they are only now beginning to speak of introducing steam ploughs-the Viceroy of Egypt began eight years ago. If the resources of India had been opened we would at this moment have been independent of the supply from America to a healthy extent. If the resources of India were developed there would have been no need for the waste, or, rather, the employment of my time and your space in this discussion. I do not deny that good has been done by those excellent officers named by 'A.-I.,' but what has been done by them only goes to illustrate the fact that 'if the right thing be done at the right time,' the agricultural powers of India are practically unlimited; and if 'A.-I.' can produce in India, as a result of Government management, in the way he proposes, five millions of bales for export to England—or, in other words, that every acre yields 200 lbs. to 300 lbs. of cotton in place of 1½ million bales or 50 lbs. to 70 lbs. per acre as at present, then I have

not a word to say in condemnation of his policy.

tend to reduce the mass to semi-serfdom.\*

"Second. 'Mr. Briggs evidently has no idea of the social position of an Indian collector.' I will not dwell upon this, inasmuch as I cannot see that it matters much one way or the other, suffice it to say that if the ryots are better off now than ever they were, it is at a fearful loss to us, who have had to give them 2s. 6d. per lb. for that which, previous to the American war, they were glad to give us at 2½d. to 4d. per lb. In the present market it is fetching from 9d. to 10d. per lb.; in this way they have cost us upwards of 100 millions sterling the last ten years more than value received. It seems absurd on the face of it to imagine that one collector can do any good when his presence is required over an area of 3,000 square miles, and where he can only make his appearance once in twelve months. 'When the cat's away the mice will play,'

"Third. With regard to the native capitalist, 'A.-I.' says the reason why he does not embark in 'Government or railway stock is that they make so much better profits by mortgage, or by trading, say 12 per cent.,' &c., and that 'dissatisfaction with English rule has nothing to do with the fact.' Be this as it may, it is a matter of little importance; but then, why, if they are such patriots, do they refuse out of such handsome profits to contribute 3½ per cent. of these profits to the Government in the shape of income tax? If they were wise enough to see that the common interest of the masses were in harmony and identical with their own, they would gladly submit to an income tax in order to enable the Government to repeal the accursed salt and opium tax, and also the export and import duties on rice, corn, and coffee. These are taxes of an unjust and suicidal nature, and which

"Fourth. 'It is rather difficult to understand what Mr. Briggs means by free trade in land. Surely he has not imbibed the Fenian idea of taking the land from those who have it (the Government in this case) and giving it, without rent, to those who now till it.' Now, if ever there was a misrepresentation this is one, and one of a most glaring kind. 'A.-I.' must not have read Mr. Briggs's opinions on this question; or if he has he must be guilty of the ignorance he charges Mr. Briggs with, viz., that of not understanding the 'meaning

of what he reads.'
"He thinks to put Mr. Briggs down by attacking him on his

<sup>\*</sup> No government has any right to hold land except as trustees for the benefit of the whole people.

'peculiar crotchet,' viz., the question of reclaiming and cultivating the hundreds of millions of acres of waste lands now in possession of the cobra and tiger, and which would, under a wise alienation law, become fruitful fields in the hands of the thrifty and industrious ryot, who would then be a free citizen in place of a semi-barbarous serf. But what is meant by free trade in land? Mr. Briggs's definition is this, viz., that assuming the country to be principally in a state of nature—such as the backwoods of America and Canada, the wilds of Australia, and the jungle of India-it is the duty of the State or Government for the time being not to take possession as owners with a view to raise a revenue from the first alienation, but to give it to the cultivator or ryot, without money or without price, on the sole condition of his settling upon and cultivating them, or of his making railways, irrigation works, water transit, or any other public work for the general benefit of the State; after this the land so alienated shall be the property of the person or persons so improving it, who shall be free to trade with it or its produce without the interference of Government in either customs or excise, or any other way, save a percentage of the profits or annual income of the owner, which percentage would then be a just tax, or rent to the State. That is the Free Trade in land which has enabled the Americans to find that 'middle class' spontaneously springing up in their midst, cultivating their cotton fields and corn fields, who build their cities, make their water ways and railways, so that in spite of the injurious effects of their hostile tariffs, they are now increasing their supply of cotton by upwards of half a million bales per annum, and by the increase of that and other produce of the soil, they are destined soon to leave India behind in the same 'stick in the mud' state as we found her at the commencement of the late civil war in the United States of America. It is, therefore, not a question of land already in the hands of the 'native tenant farmer,' it is a question of the alienation of the waste lands under a sound land law, subject to the state tax or rent, or, speaking metaphorically, of two blades of grass growing where only one grew before (for grass put cotton, if you please). There will some day, not far distant, I fear, be an Indian land question, in a much uglier form than the 'Irish land question.' Mr. Cobden, just before he died, said, 'If I were 25 years old, in place of twice that number, I would take Adam Smith in my hand, and I would have a league for free trade in land just as we had a league for free trade in corn, &c.'

## "'ANGLO-INDIAN'S' LETTER NO. 2.

"First, with regard to the opposition to the income tax, I repeat hat the opposition was 'impolitic,' inasmuch as ruin to themselves in

<sup>\*</sup> That "land crotchet" would speedily prevent the frequently-recurring famines, like the present one, that has caused the death of hundreds of thousands of the human family.

common with the masses must be the inevitable result of a system of taxation which is unjust. The opposition was an 'ignorant' one, inasmuch as it did not insist upon the repeal of the iniquitous bread salt, and opinm taxes as an equivalent for the imposition of the ineone tax. 'Anglo-Indian' says, 'If the Government had any conception of the misery which the raising of the salt tax inflicts on the poorer class, they would have hesitated before levying so unjust a tax.' Again, he says, 'Poor natives on the coast have to use mud scraped off from the salt pans, or sea water, with their food, as they are unable to purchase the highly-taxed salt. The mortality occasioned by the want of this article will be increased by this new imposition of 7½d. in the maund.' And in the face of the above facts 'A.-I,' in his letter No. I, chides me for pitying such people, 'who do not require my pity;' and these are the people who are dying by millions, every two or three years, of starvation and famine, to wit, the Orissa famine and the Bengal famine.

"Second. The impolicy of the tax (what tax?). I think Mr. Gladstone does not make it quite clear whether he is speaking of the income or salt tax when he cites the moral objection. My opinion is that the extreme outcry against the income tax is one of its greatest recommendations, inasmuch as it goes to prove that when the taxes are levied direct there will be a greater check put upon wasteful and needless expenditure by Government in the way of pressure from without, which seems to be the only way to influence our legislature

either for good or for evil.

"Third needs no comment.

"Fourth. Mr. Briggs did not say that the income tax was introduced as an equivalent for the repeal of other taxes which act as impediments to trade, but Mr. B. would only be too glad to see such a policy carried out.

"Fifth. Mr. Briggs did not object to the 'speedy construction of railways to the cotton districts.' He only objects to the slowness of the

process by which they are sought to be developed.

"'A.-I.' speaks of the want of railways, and their effects; how disastrons to us during the cotton famine, and to the Indians during the Orissa and Bengal famines from the want of water they were; and in the face of this, with a consistency of what he terms a 'Loochar,' he says:—

"Sixthly. 'I am certain we shall all be glad to welcome General Sir A. Cotton if Mr. Briggs can induce him to come; and if he, when lecturing, will confine himself to the benefits derived from irrigation, we shall be highly delighted and instructed. We do not believe in water communication in India, and a lecture on that subject would not be appreciated.'

"There is more significance in the last three lines than in all the rest of 'A.-I.'s' two letters; but as the length of this letter has already, I fear, exceeded your limits, I must leave the comments upon it to a future occasion. Suffice to say that Sir A. Cotton offers to do

(and shows clearly in the accompanying pamphlet that it can be done) for £35,000,000 more efficient works for transit, coupling it with irrigation, than Government wasteful agency can do in making railways for £100,000,000 sterling; and, with all the power of Government's advocates, Sir A. C.'s statement has not been disproved. Allow me to call your attention to pages 7 and 8 of Sir A.'s pamphlet. Finally, I would recommend to the notice of 'A.-l.' the first column in page 4 of the Times supplement of the 2nd inst., where he will find out the hopelessness of the policy recommended by him.—Yours, &c.,

"The Homestead, June 21, 1870.

"T. BRIGGS."

#### "INDIAN COTTON SUPPLY.

#### "To the Editor of the Manchester Courier.

"Sir,-In your issue of the 25th appears a letter from 'Anglo-Indian,' purporting to be a reply to mine, which appeared in your issues of the 29th June and 6th July last. It seems strange that one whose love for India is apparently so warm should require prompting at the end of two months to take up his pen in her defence. Well may he be anxious to excuse himself from being one of those who 'sit with folded arms until another cotton famine comes upon us.' 'Anglo-Indian' has thought fit to attack General Sir A. Cotton in the same letter. I will not attempt to answer that part of the letter, as I know the General is well able to defend himself, if only in health, but I fear he is not well just now. The question in itself is so important for this country that I am in duty bound called upon to answer on patriotic grounds, and I am of opinion that no opportunity should be lost for ventilating it. 'A.-I.' has fallen into the common practice of many old Indians, namely, that when beaten in argument they fall back upon their Indian experience and ask, 'Have you been in India?' as though an official experience under a false regime in India could fit a man for the business of everyday life, and make him efficient in questions of political economy. I submit, with all due deference, that, as a rule, these are the last men to be consulted on such matters.

"First. Because of their position as consumers of the taxes of the country, apparently to them their interests do not harmonise with the interests of the general body of tax-payers, the latter having the same

feeling: hence a social anarchy arises.

"Second. Because out of a hundred of these old Indians you will find ninety-nine different opinions on all matters referring to the right thing to be done, and the way how to do it. It is the old story of 'doctors differing.' They can see nothing except through official spectacles.

"The Cotton Supply Association, no doubt, are very useful in pointing out, by memorials, &c., to Government what ought to be

done so far as model farms and agricultural cottages are concerned, but what is the use of trying to force agricultural improvements down the throats of 100,000,000 agriculturists who are unwilling to receive them? It is like 'taking the steed to the brook when he is not willing to drink.' No power on earth can make him drink until he is made thirsty. So will it ever be with the agricultural mind (whether in India or elsewhere) until it begins to thirst after knowledge for the necessary agricultural improvements. agrees with me that 'nothing is done by private enterprise in India, and therefore it is necessary to memorialise Government to do everything.' So long as this is the case it is hopeless to expect progress in agriculture, except in homeopathic doses, unsuited to the necessity of the case and repugnant to the spirit of the age. 'A.-I.' and the Cotton Supply Association seem to take very kindly to the snubbing received from Lord Mayo; they simply remind me of the story about the 'dog who licked the hand that scourged him.' His lordship replies to their memorial as follows:-

"The memorialists should be reminded that in America every undertaking is effected by the spontaneous and unaided efforts of the most energetic people in the world. That in India, on the contrary, all progress is dependent on the exertions of Government, and it may be remarked that no parallel whatever exists between the condition of the two countries; and that, while all possible efforts will be made for the adoption of all suitable measures for the preservation and permanence of the cotton industry of India, it cannot be denied that difficulties lie in the path of the Government of India in this respect that are not to be found in countries inhabited by Anglo-Saxon or

Teutonic races.'

"This may be very true, and a very clever reply to the memorialists; it may be, also, a very nice cloak for 'A.-I.' to shelter under; but I think I can make it clear to your readers that it is unworthy of a great statesman, and will not bear the slightest touch of a logical investigation as regards its statesmanship or patriotism. In the first place, Lord Mayo is guilty of a libel on the people of India—not only the natives but their Anglo-Saxon rulers—when he makes so odious a comparison. Let us now proceed to examine the question of the character of the natives, and I fancy we shall find the Hindoos are not as a rule so unthrifty and contemptible a race as 'A.-I.' and Lord Mayo' take them to be. How often have we heard of groups of 200 to 500 Indian coolies, after serving faithfully their five years' apprenticeship in the West Indies and elsewhere, clubbing together with their savings out of their miserable pittance received as wages during that time, and chartering a ship to take them home, each possessed of a competence sufficient to buy them a wife or two, and live in comfortable circumstances the rest of their life. Again, we have proof that in more than one case a Hindoo gets coal at the bottom of the pit some sixty yards deep, and his wife carries it up a perpendicular ladder fixed to the side

of the shaft on her head, in baskets of 80 lbs. each, and lays down the coal at the pit's mouth at a cost for labour of 2d. per cwt. or thereabouts-say 3s. 6d. per ton. Where is your Anglo-Saxon race of labourers that will compete with this, provided the Government would deal fairly with them, and leave these things to the 'spontaneous and unaided efforts' of the people? Moreover, if the Anglo-Saxon or Teutonic be the only race of people that can develop the cotton-growing powers of the soil, why do we find the Americans scouring the celestial empire for Asiatics? Why, again, do we hear-aye, and feel too-that the African race, even after emancipation, and the destruction by a devastating war, in the Southern States of all their implements and other means save their own labour, have so wonderfully reorganised themselves as to be able to leave India so far behind. They are sending us nearly double the number of bales—say three millions for India's one and a half millions. Perhaps 'A.-I.' and his lordship will answer the latter point by saying these people have 'Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic' employers. This is quite true, but who is to blame for the absence of this class in India? Let the story in my letter in the Courier of the 6th ult. about the visit to Cachar answer this. 'A.-1.' takes credit to himself for agreeing with me in the truth of that story, and says it proves his case. Again, we have cotton-growing colonies in the tropics, proved to be capable of producing 400 to 500 pounds of clean cotton to the acre, and these colonies are peopled, on the whole, with the Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic races, yet they do not bear out Lord Mayo's theory, for they are yet almost blanks on the map of the world as regards population compared with extent of territory, and they are continually complaining that they cannot send us cotton for want of coolie labour, that being the only element the want of which prevents them doing so. His lordship says 'that in India almost all progress is dependent on the exertions of Government, and that no parallel exists between the condition of the two countries,' i.e., India and America. Granted, for the sake of argument, that it is so, what do we find? We find from the above facts, and inasmuch as India has got the right kind of labour, and soil, and climate (the first cheaper than any other part of the world), and that America having to seek her labour all over the world, and when obtained it is more than 300 per cent. dearer than the same article in India, that the 'conditions' (provided that the brains of her rulers were equal to the task) are immensely in favour of India. On this point I would suggest that 'A.-1.' should read an article printed in your issue of the 26th of August (inst.), copied from the New York Journal of Commerce, headed, American Cotton—Chinese Immigrants.' Again, by way of a further illustration of the fact that the 'conditions' are in favour of India, let us take the history of the two countries for the last ten years. In 1861 the Americans began to destroy all their wealth and life, and at the end of four years they had operated so successfully as to destroy £1,800,000,000 worth of property, and killed and disabled about 500,000 labourers. Here

is property destroyed in this short space of four years amounting to more than twice our national debt. Well, what was India doing all these four years? If she had had wise legislators she would have taken the tide at the flood, which would have led her on to fortune, but lo! 'there are difficulties in the path.' Lord Canning saw those difficulties, and initiated a policy that would have by this time removed them, not by the action of the sword, but by that of the ploughshare (steam ploughs perhaps); not by a great and bloody convulsion, but by 'spontaneous efforts' and a bloodless revolution, such as was experienced in England ever since the repeal of the Corn Laws up to the time when the 'mainspring of all British industry' (cotton) was denied us from America. But Lord Canning's policy was vetoed, and the 'lion was again placed in the path' (the difficulty), and the £100,000,000 handsomely handed over to India by us for her cotton more than its normal value, was spent, and lost to a great extent, and we now witness her decreasing her produce per acre and in the aggregate; whilst the Americans are getting a net average of 200 lb. to the acre, after paying all expenses, she is getting her 50 lb. to 70 lb. to the acre, out of which the ryot has to pay land tax (or rent), and all other expenses. Thus we see that India, unlike her rival, is destined to suffer from the fall of prices without being able to recoup herself by an increased quantity per acre; for instance, if she got 200 lb. per acre, at 6d. per lb., she would be richer than if she got 60 lb. at 1s. per lb. I could go on indefinitely, showing that the 'difficulties' were simply of the Government's own making, but I fear I have drawn upon your space rather freely for one letter, and I feel that I must conclude by referring 'A.-I.' to the supplement of the Cotton Supply Reporter, issued July 1, 1870, where he will find some valuable suggestions communicated by a very able writer upon the subject, ending with the following extract, which I heartily endorse, from a proclamation by Government to the people of India, viz.: 'In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward.' In order to bring about this state of things, let them do as the Anglo-Saxon rulers of America do, viz., in times of peace disband their armies, sheath the sword and take up the plough, alienate the soil to the people under a sound land law, and secure in return the people's affections.-Yours, &c., "THOMAS BRIGGS,

"At Mr. Cole's, Llanbedr, near Conway, N. Wales. "August 31, 1870."

Here it is felt desirable for general information to give Sir A. Cotton's letter to Mr. Briggs on this great subject.

Copy of letter from Sir A. Cotton to Mr. T. Briggs, dated 30th

September, 1870:—

"My Dear Sir,—I would have sent you answers to the paragraphs in 'Anglo-Indian's' letter long ago, but I have been prevented by serious illness, and I must be short now.

"'A.-I.' says he does not believe in the superiority of water-

carriage for India.

"How easy it is to repeat bare assertions of this sort, if we are only allowed to do so without attempting to answer the facts and arguments brought forward in favour of it. In my papers the subject is fully argued by a man who has now the best opportunity of proving the matters, and not a word is said i answer to mine. We may be sure he would if he could. It is easily shown that water-carriage is—

"I. Much cheaper to obtain.

"2. Much cheaper in its use.

"3. That it can be provided in a shorter time.

"4. That it provides for any amount of transit, which railways cannot; no railway can carry the millions of tons on single lines that India requires.

"5. That it will easily pay a good profit, while the most profitable railway in India costs the Government £570,000 a year to make up

the interest guaranteed.\*

"6. It can be combined with irrigation.

"7. It involves drainage, so important to the health of the country.

"8. Every mile of canal is of great value in providing water for man and beast.

"9. It is more defencible than railways.

"It can be worked at ample speed for all purposes. Not one of them can be controverted, of which we have ample proof that not one of them has been even attempted to be controverted, either by 'A.-I.' or by any one of the opponents at the long discussions in the rooms of the East India Association.

"'A.-1.' says that reservoirs can only be made at an enormous expense. My assertion that there is no foundation for this, speaking from a thorough practical acquaintance with the subject, is a sufficient answer to this. The cost of storing water for canals is perfectly insignificant—some one or two per cent. in addition to the cost of the canal itself.

"'A.-I.' then asks where are steamboat canals to be found in India? The answer is in Kurnaul, Cuddapah, Godavery, Kistnah, &c.; in Madras, in Orissa, and Bengal, in the N.W. provinces, in the Punjaub, in Simla, &c.

"This is perfectly well known; the Ganges Canal alone has 700 miles of primary canal, amply capacious for steamboats, besides

thousands of miles of branches.

"The Kistnah and Godavery Deltas have several hundred miles in which a steamer is running at this moment. The Bishop of Madras, in a late tour, travelled in a steamer from Musubpotum to Cunseadu, 170 miles. The main canal in Kurnaul also is 150 miles long, the first

<sup>\*</sup> This was written in 1870. Now (1877) there is a profit on this particular line over and above the 5 per cent. guaranteed.

70 miles before it divides being 60 yards broad and 8 feet deep. All these are notorious facts. How could a man who is instructing the public all about water-transit in India be so unacquainted with the whole subject as not to know them?

"'Anglo-Indian' also asks what are the profits of the Ganges Navigation Company? A man must be terribly at a loss for some-

thing to say against steamboat canals when he is driven to this.

"Am I arguing for confining ourselves to rivers, and for leaving them unimproved, and am I responsible for the management of navi-

gation companies?

"It so happens, however, that a gentleman lately sent me the full accounts of the working of the steamers in the Burhampooter, and the whole cost was a little more than a farthing a ton a mile on an unimproved river, in which it would certainly be four or five times what it would be in a steamboat canal. He also told me that they gave up an agreement with the railway to carry goods for them from the main Ganges to Calcutta at prices below the regular tariffs, because they found they could carry them cheaper themselves three times the distance through the intricate navigation of the Samderbunds, and this, though the railway, at its regular rates, is carrying at such a loss that it receives a subsidy from the Government of £50,000 a year on 110 miles. If this does not show the advantage of water-carriage over the railway, nothing can.

"'A.-1.' says, 'Let him compare the profits on the river with the results on the railway, and then let him urge the advantages of water-

carriage.'

"Does 'A.-I.' by this assert that the railways are profitable, if not, what does it mean? The railways are carrying at from a Id. to 8d. a ton per mile, and at this charge they have accumulated a debt of twenty-one millions, and it is increasing at the rate of three millions a year, according to the last blue-book. These are the results of the railways. I don't know what the profits on the rivers are, but I am quite sure if the results were like those of the railways, no merchants would be foolish enough to own shares in them, or run steamers on them, for the Government would not make up their losses. But, as I have said before, how entirely without an argument against steamboat canals must a man be when he talks about unimproved rivers. But if we compare the results of railways with them, how long would the railways continue to carry goods at a farthing a ton per mile, without the Government repaying their losses?

"'A.-I.' then asks how many shares were taken by natives in the Madras irrigation scheme. I think most likely none, though I don't know. I'm quite sure that if the Government were to bring forward a scheme of canals as they have of railways, with 5 per cent. guaranteed and a share of the profits, abundance of shares would be taken by

natives.

"A.-I.' then emphatically denies that the ryot is an abject serf, &c.

"'An Inquirer' knows perfectly well what the real condition of the Indian ryot is, and if 'A.-I.' does not, he should read some of the late official papers on the state of the Bengal ryot, in the discussion

about the permanent settlements.

"'A.-I.' also says the right thing is being done, that is, that having brought a charge of three millions a year upon the taxes by spending one hundred millions on primary lines of rail, it is right to spend another hundred millions on secondary lines, and thereby certainly bring a further charge of four or five millions a year upon the treasury, whilst they could construct water-lines at a fifth to a tenth the cost of railways, and carry by them at one-tenth the railway charge, without a charge upon the revenue of one rupee. He adds, 'But where the Government have to do everything, the progress is necessarily slow.' Certainly it must, if they will persist in setting about them in a way so monstrously and palpably the wrong one. In Godavery and Kistnah £800,000 has been spent, and some seven or eight hundred miles of navigation have been obtained, besides watering already seven or eight hundred thousand acres. If things are thus set about in the right way the progress will be exceedingly rapid, but if the Government will make communications to carry one or two hundred thousand tons a year, at a cost of £20,000 a mile, the progress must needs be slow.

"If the Government were to guarantee f,100,000,000 to build hothouses to grow sugar in England, the progress would necessarily be slow, but it would be because the whole proceeding was altogether counter to the wants and circumstances of England, just as the railways are in India. If the Government would spend a quarter of a million per district in the remaining unirrigated districts, twenty millions, which might be spent in five years, would cover all India with a complete network of steamboat canals, secure many districts from famine, entirely remove the cause of those malignant fevers, and, instead of a charge upon their taxes, add so many millions a year to revenue as to compel them to abolish the cursed salt tax, &c., and be prepared for the loss of the opium revenue. The amount of the income tax, the source of such prodigious irritation at this moment, would be an utterly insignificant portion of the profits on twenty millions so spent. The eight hundred thousand pounds spent on canals in Godavery nearly provides for the loss on the East Indian Railway, for it yields a profit of half a million a year. But all these things have been written over and over again, and no opponent attempts to answer them excepting by such arguments as this: 'I don't believe in water carriage, &c.' But such letters as this of 'A.-I.' and all that is now going on are highly encouraging; they show how the opponents feel that the public are beginning to understand the subject, and that it is absolutely necessary to try and say something. I may conclude with a question: How is it that neither in those newspaper letters nor in official papers the slightest allusion is made to the wonderful results of capital

spent in irrigation and navigation in Godavery? Now, it is a fact that a profit of half a million a year has been made in two districts by a certain mode of spending money, and not a single paper on the finances makes the slightest allusion to it. Even a governor of Madras who saw these districts, and wrote most eloquently on the results of the mode of spending money, from the moment he went to Bengal never alluded to them. Only think what would be said if the railways were yielding one per cent. above the necessary interests instead of fifty, as those navigation and irrigation works are; what should we not have heard about them? There can be but one reason for this not being referred to, that the other side of the question absolutely requires that this important point should be kept out of sight. I have lately had statistics sent me which show that about £100,000 a year is paid for transit in goods and passengers in these Delta canals—an isolated patch of navigation entirely cut off from every one of those great cities or centres of traffic, either inland or on the coast. What would be the traffic on them if they were put in communication with Hyderabad, Calcutta, and Madras? I am sorry to find I have been much too long, but I cannot undertake to condense what I have written.

"(Signed)

A. COTTON."

#### CHAPTER XII.

#### THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

TEMPERANCE in all things is a cardinal virtue. A man who indulges his appetites beyond the satisfaction of the laws of health can never attain the highest development of body and mind. Therefore intemperance is a sin against himself. But we do not believe in being made "temperate" by Act of Parliament. There is little merit The man who would steal if there were no law against in enforced virtue. theft is not an honest man. And he who would be a drunkard if he had the means is a man of depraved taste, to say the least, and may be classed in the moral category with him who "committeth adultery in his heart," while lacking the opportunity of actualising the crime. Nevertheless, the Mosaic Laws-"Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not commit adultery"—can never be dispensed with; and the more rigidly they are enforced the better for the welfare of society. Suppose we add another: "Thou shalt not get drunk in public," and then abolish all licence laws as well as the duty regulating the sale of spirituous liquors. Let us have Free Trade in wine, rum, gin, beer, and everything else that intoxicates. At the same time let public drunkenness be treated as a disease, as a crime if you will; and let every man or woman found intoxicated outside of his or her own house, or "castle," be summarily arrested and taken to the Drunkard's Prison. Such a law would prevent more intemperance than all the licence restrictions ever enacted. This arbitrary closing of public-houses at certain hours of the night, and on Sundays, is not only a violation of popular rights, but a foolish mistake in legislation. Foolish, because it does not accomplish the object professed to be aimed at, and it creates deep discontent among the masses—that is, the lower classes, and, we may add, the very lowest, and most numerous class of the community. is a despotic law-a law that tramples on the 'liberty of the subject.' There should be no hour of the day or night, and no day of the week, when a man, be he rich or poor, may not buy and drink as much liquor, or as much beer, as he pleases. If he is fool enough to abuse the privilege, lock him up, and punish him. For this he will have nobody to blame but himself, and no cause to grumble against the State. Men arrested for stealing seldom have the impudence to rail at the law for the protection of the rights of property. And so it will be with intemperance amounting to public drunkenness: the disgrace attached to imprisonment and publicity would have a powerful check on the

appetite for drink. Let a few West-end "swells" be put in the Pillory for being drunk in the streets, and indulging in the silly nocturnal pastime of wrenching off door-knockers, and the effect in favour of the good cause of "temperance" would be magical. Prohibitory laws are always violated or evaded. There is never wanting a "striped pig," or some other means of "whipping the devil round the stump." Besides the characters of men can only be tested by temptation. Monastic virtue is but a negative quality; and no one knows what constrained innocence may do when the door is open and the restriction removed. Therefore, let us have Free Trade in all things bibible as well as edible. Then society will become robustly temperate in spite of temptation, or rather we should say, by the very resistance of temptation. Liberate the drink, but punish the drunkard. And if a man will get drunk, and play the fool, let him do it, as Hamlet said of Polonius, nowhere but in his own house.

As an illustration of the working of indirect taxation, and how the generality of working-men are hoodwinked by it, I may submit the

following incident :-

It should always be borne in mind that the amount of tax on a given article is very much less than what the consumer is charged in excess of what the cost of the article would be under the natural laws of supply and demand; or, in other words, Free Trade. But the most striking case would be the following account of a conversation I had with an agricultural labourer, whom I found about six p.m. one evening this summer just passed:

Mr. B. to Labourer: You are enjoying your pipe after your day's

work; do you find much benefit in it?

Labourer: Yes! it soothes one, you know, after a hard day's work.

Mr. B.: How much tobacco do you consume in a week?

Labourer: 2 oz. generally.

Mr. B: What do you pay for it?

Labourer: 8d. for the 2 oz.

Mr. B.: Are you a teetotaler, or do you take beer?

Labourer: I take a pint to my dinner and a pint to my supper generally, but more in harvest-time.

Mr. B.: What family have you? Labourer: A wife and three children. Mr. B.: Does your wife take beer?

Labourer: She has half a pint to dinner, and half a pint to supper generally, when we can afford it; the doctor orders it for the sake of the baby.

Mr. B.: What wages do you get?

<sup>\*</sup> Where is a man's moral responsibility if his virtuous actions (under legislative restrictions) are all done for him to order at second hand by force of Law in removing all temptations out of his reach, thus reducing him to the status of a child?

Labourer: 15s. a week; but my wife earns a little to make out with.

Mr. B.: Do you pay any taxes? Labourer: No; I pay no taxes.

Mr. B.: Don't you know that when you buy your 2 oz. of tobacco for 8d. that out of that 8d. you pay 6d. of a tax—that is, were there no tax on it the price would be 2d. for 2 oz., or 1d. an oz., without considering the amount of adulteration encouraged by the tax? Then as to your beer, your consumption is twenty-one pints a week—viz., two pints a day for yourself, and one pint for your wife. Don't you know that were there no tax upon malt this beer could be supplied to you at a 1d. a pint in place of 2d., and give the wholesale and retail dealer 100 per cent. profit, each—that is, 1s. 9d. a week?

Labourer: No; I did not know that.

Mr. B.: Let me see how much your taxes come to on these two articles alone.

First, 2 oz. of tobacco at 4d., which, if untaxed, would be 1d. per

oz.; tax, 6d.

Second, twenty-one pints of beer at 2d., if untaxed would be Id.; tax, Is. 9d.; total tax, 2s. 3d. a week on two taxed articles alone, which, on your wages 15s. a week, comes to an amount equivalent to 15 per cent. of an income tax.

As regards the national beverage of Scotland, a friend, Mr.

McCarthy, writes me from Glasgow as follows:-

"I think our national drink, whisky, can be made for 2s. per gallon, and the duty, and charges as the result of that duty, and the monopoly, raises it to 20s. per gallon when sold to the working classes. Its cost without duty, allowing for the profits of the seller, is \darksquare. Per glass, but, with duty, &c., he is bound to pay eleven times more, say 4d. per glass: so that any family of three adults indulging in their national beverage to the extent of four glasses each per week, being twelve in all, will pay 4s. for what, without Government interference, would only have cost 5d., being an argument (to the extent of 3s. 7d. per week for each family) against excise duties."

Under Free trade, i.e., abolition of duties, the working-man could buy his gallon of whisky for 2s., put it into his cellar, and when he required a glass, hand over to his wife the 4d. (or 6d. as the case may be) that now goes to buy silk dresses and other luxuries for the publican's wife, by this plan the result would be that for every gallon of

whisky (drunk at his own fireside) :-

Paid to wife, at 4d. glass, gallon = 30s. 01 at 6d. = 45s.

Deduct first cost ... 2s. 2s.

Profit saved ... 28s. 43s.

The gallon being 90 glasses

Excise Liquors.—Mr. Hoyle's Letter in the "Echo."

"Dear Sir,—The Excise returns which are just published give us the data by which we are enabled to calculate the consumption of intoxicating liquors in the United Kingdom for the year 1876.

The following table gives particulars of the various kinds of intoxicating liquors consumed, and also the money expended thereon:—

				Gals.		
British Spirits	•••	*** ·		29,950,288 (a) at 20s. £,29,950,288		
Foreign Špirits		•••	• • •	11,487,795 (b) at 24s. 13,785,354		
Wine		•••		18,660,846 (c) at 18s. 16,794,761		
Beer-Sugar use	d, 860,	223 CW				
equal to 3,670	,284 b	ushels r	nalt.			
Malt used, 59,298,869 (e) bushels						
	<u>``</u>	•				

£147,288,759

(a)	See Trade and	Navigation Returns,	Feb.,	1877,	p.	72.
(6)	Ditto	ditto	Dec.,	1876,	p.	12.
$\langle c \rangle$	Ditto	ditto	Dec.,	1876,	p.	14.
(d)	Ditto	ditto	Feb.,	1877,	p.	71.
(e)	Ditto	ditto	Feb.,	1877,	p.	71.

In 1876 the population of the United Kingdom was 33,089,237, which would give an expenditure of £4 9s. for every man, woman, and

child in the kingdom.\*

It is generally allowed by those who have carefully investigated the question, that the indirect cost and loss which result from the liquor traffic are at least as great as the direct expenditure upon the drink. If so, then the aggregate cost and loss to the nation of the liquor traffic, during last year, reached the appalling sum of £294,577,520; but if we make a liberal allowance, and take £54,577,520 off this amount, it still leaves the sum of £240,000,000.

The total value of all our foreign export trade last year was £200,575,856; it will be seen, therefore, that the direct and indirect cost of the nation's drinking last year exceeded by nearly £40,000,000

the entire value of all our foreign export trade.

During the last seven years the direct cost of our drinking has been as follows:—

<sup>\*</sup> An average of £22 5s, per annum for every father of a family in the United Kingdom.—AUTHOR.

1870	• • •		•••	•••		£118,836,284
1871	•••	•••	•••	•••	•••	118,906,066
1872	•••	•••	•••	•••	•••	131,601,462
1873	•••	• • •		•••		140,014,742
1874		•••	• • •	•••	•••	141,342,997
1875	•••	***	•••	• • •	•••	142,876,669
1876	•••	•••	•••	•••	•••	147,288,759
						£940,866,979

The above figures only represent the direct expenditure upon the drink; if to this be added the indirect loss, it will give over £1,800,000,000, a sum about two and a half times the entire amount of our national debt.

And what has the nation got in return for this enormous outlay and loss?

1st. Our home trade has been crippled and paralysed. If the drink money had been expended on manufactures it would have given us a most flourishing home trade; and, further, it would have brought comfort and plenty to hundreds of thousands of stinted homes.

2nd. Our workshops and manufactories have been embarrassed and upset in consequence of the unsteadiness and irregularity of our workmen. Great inconvenience and often serious losses have resulted therefrom.

3rd. Our land has been deluged by intemperance, our population has been degraded and debased, and a large mass of our people converted into paupers, criminals, lunatics, &c.

4th. It has caused a destruction of grain and produce equivalent to about 1,200,000,000 4-lb. loaves annually—an amount of food which would have maintained the entire population of the United Kingdom for more than four months each year.

5th. Innumerable accidents, diseases, and premature deaths have been caused. To such an extent does this take place, that Dr. B. W. Richardson, President of the Health Section of the Social Science Congress, stated at Brighton, October, 1875, that the duration of life in this country was diminished to the extent of one-third through the sale and use of intoxicating liquors.

6th. Social, educational, political, moral, and religious progress have been obstructed.

7th. Our homes have been filled with misery, the youth and manhood of our land have been corrupted and blighted, and the female population of our country is rapidly being involved in the same vortex of debasement and ruin.

And for these appalling evils, during the last seven years, we have directly and indirectly paid the sum of £1,800,000,000.

If we had paid this amount to be rid of the evils, we should have acted a common-sense and Christian part.

No wonder that there should be such a depression in all our markets; if only half this amount had been diverted into the home trade, and expended in purchasing articles of clothing, &c., it would have given such an impetus to trade as would have kept every workshop and mill constantly busy.\*

What, then, shall be done to remedy the great evil?

1st. We must set our faces against, and, by our personal example,

discourage the drinking customs of society.

2nd. We must give our earnest support to all legislative measures calculated to remove the overwhelming temptations to intemperance which abound in our land.

Apologising for trespassing to such an extent upon your space, I remain, yours, &c., WILLIAM HOYLE, Claremont, Bury, March 12th.

1877."—Echo, March 14th, 1877.

On reading the above it occurred to me that it might do some good if the public were informed how little they get for their money through having a tax upon their beverage, and how much they would save by removing this tax from the mouth to the breeches pocket direct. saving being sufficient to keep the 140,000 publicans of the nation in turtle-soup and champagne for the rest of their lives; not that I wish them to indulge in such useless luxuries, but that the money saved should be spent in such useful things as would quadruple the home trade of the country, which would provide them other and more honourable and profitable occupation, and which I contend would be the only legitimate compensation. Such things, for example, as hats, collars, shirts, shoes, breeches, waistcoats, coats, and ulsters; bonnets, gowns, and female dresses generally; blankets, sheets, quilts, beds, mattresses, and general furniture; bread, meat, and groceries, and, though last not least, education untainted with pauperism, and a thousand other things that would go to increase the home trade in manufactures. With this view I wrote the following letter to the Echo, which was for some reason rejected; but it is here printed, on public grounds :--

# Answer to Mr. Hoyle's Letter.

Thanks for your generous aid, not only for publishing Mr. Hoyle's interesting letter, but for your able leader in the same impression in ventilating the question. In craving your indulgence for a few remarks in reply to Mr. Hoyle's letter, I will not occupy your space in going through the details of his figures, but confine myself to the question of remedy.

<sup>\*</sup> But Mr. Hoyle will not grant the first condition calculated to divert "the one-half of the amount into the home trade," viz., repealing of the tax and licences that create the monopoly prices; nor has he had the moral courage to put in a rejoinder to the following letter in reply to the above in the Echo.

The remedy I would suggest is, first of all, to repeal the tax; this is the one thing indispensable before any other plan can succeed.

The tax is the mainstay of the traffic, and the traffic is the mainstay of the revenue; whilst the Government lives upon the wages of this sin it is powerless to eradicate the evil. To destroy this monstrous evil would be simply ruinous to the Government under the present system of levying the Imperial revenue; how can we expect them then to strike a blow at this grievous wrong, and sweep away the monopoly which enriches them and the few distillers, large brewers, and maltsters, "but makes the nation poor indeed." The following figures will show how the monopoly is guaranteed by the tax in realising an enormous profit, whilst nearly all other legitimate trades are suffering ruinous losses through bad trade—the result of the monopoly.

According to Mr. Hoyle's statement the public paid last year no less a sum than £147,288,759 for its annual consumption of drink.

Since writing the above, I find a letter from Mr. Dawson Burns in the *Echo* of 23rd inst., reducing Mr. Hoyle's estimate to £133,631,021, making a difference of £13,657,738. This is rather a serious amount. Suppose you take the mean between the two, the intoxicating drink bill for 1876 will then stand as follows, £140,464,888. Cost of manufacture:—

Ist.       British Spirits, 29,930,288 gals. at 2s.          2nd.       Foreign Spirits, 11,487,795 gals. at 2s. 6d.          3rd.       Wine, 18,600,846 gals. at 5s.           4th.       Beer Malt used.        59,298,869 bus.         Beer, Sugar, equal to        4,129,070 "	
Total bushels 63,427,939  Equal to barrels, 31,713,969 at per barrel, 12s. 6d., exclusive of the malt tax  5th. British Wines, &c., 11,000,000 at 1s., estimated	19,821,230 550,000 £29,400,443

Thus showing that the consumer pays £140,464,888 for an article which

Cost to manufacture Add say 100 per cent. as profit Add tax including malt	£29,400,443 29,400,443 30,936,615 T. cost 89,737,501
_	_

Leaving per annum ... ... ... ... £50,727,387

after allowing the cost of production, 100 per cent. profit, and the tax. Now, as I said before, my proposal is to repeal the tax, and raise

the same amount of revenue, viz., £30,936,615 direct, in such way as will take from each individual his just proportion according to his means. What is more easy? By this plan we should leave in the pockets of the people the £50,000,000 odd per annum as shown above, wherewith to buy useful things and improve the condition of society, in place of making a handful of men into millionaires, and enable them to buy up all the public-houses, build gin palaces, and gamble on the stock exchange.

These £50,000,000 per annum would soon treble the home trade of the country, and give an impetus to the foreign trade. Mr. Hoyle is highly to be praised for bringing this question before the public, for the more it is ventilated, the sooner will the true remedy be found. Mr. Hoyle suggests two modes of procedure as remedy. Ist. We must set our faces against, and, by personal example, discourage the drinking customs of society. 2nd. We must give our earnest support to all legislative measures calculated to remove the overwhelming

temptations, &c.

This is good advice, no doubt, and if acted upon universally would do immense good; but who are the we he alludes to in both cases? If it be the United Kingdom Alliance, they have been doing this for years very earnestly and nobly, but are unable to stem the current, as is proved by the annual increase of drunkenness, all the time going ahead until it has amounted to about 140 millions a year. It is shrewdly remarked in your leader that "there are or would be some people who would drink to excess, no matter what legal restrictions were put in their way, just as some people will have opium." My proposal is to repeal the tax, and then you can deal with this section without inflicting a penalty and injuring the innocent 99 out of every 100 individuals of society who only take to their meals what is good for them.

What does the 1,133 million gallons of beer come to after all? The population contains 18 million grown-up people of over 18 years of age. This is only a fraction short of ten pints a week, one and a half pints per day. Why should men who like it to their meals in such moderate quantities be made to pay three times its value as a natural

market price under free trade?

If the repeal of the tax has the effect of enlarging the field of employment in the manufacture and consumption of useful things (which in the nature of things it must), will it not also have the effect of lifting up the physical as well as the moral condition of the people, and raise the standard of comfort, and so as a general rule put a stop to such evils? When a married man feels secure from the slough of pauperism, he will delight in taking his pot of harmless home-brewed to his meals, and within his own family circle, rendering his home happy and the public-house deserted. I am of opinion that Mr. Tennant was right when he wrote that "the history of these duties proves that taxation is not the means for combating with

habits of intemperance. Such habits are not the effect of cheap spirits, but of a low tone of morality, with bodily and mental depression; and in support of this theory I quoted Mr. Johnson's letter to the *Ipswich Journal* in support of the repeal of the malt tax in January, 1866, which will be found under that heading. (See back, page 76.)

It is high time our leaders were up and doing, for the floodgates are open, and destruction staring us in the face from drink. A fearful responsibility attaches to all—every one, be he great or small, who has a voice in our country, is responsible for the drunkenness, the crime, and misery which is stalking through our midst—for desolate homes, bruised husbands, beaten women, and starving children. Let us be up and doing as long as it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work.

Yes, let us work in the day, in the light of sober-minded intelligence, and not under the glimmerings of the moon, or the false flashes of an ignis fatuus. Enthusiasm for an idea is all very well when the idea is a right one, and the inflatus is governed and directed by knowledge and experience of our common complex humanity. There is great danger of being led away from that medium that has been for cycles

of ages lauded as the pathway of truth.

There is no greater work before those persons interested in the true welfare of the kingdom than the repeal of indirect taxation, for the principle bears directly on all the vital forces of the commonwealth. It lies at the base of the drunkenness of the people, and operates equally negatively and positively on our national status. Many of the most knowing, if not greatest, public men of the day have declared to me that there is no other set of public measures

which will bear comparison with them in importance.

The hope of seeing those measures carried may now be small, yet that is no reason why they should be put aside, but all the more necessary to continue the agitation with renewed zeal. It has been affirmed that all our public men, or nearly all, are self-satisfied with things as they are—the only exception is that the great ones who are "out want to get in place and power." They all seem to feel conscious that they have not the mental and moral calibre to engage in combating for the greaf principles of the right and true. Some influential gentlemen candidly confess to me that they cannot see how the public force can be roused, necessary to achieve the abolition of our obnoxious tariffs that cause such crime and misery. They complain that even the better class of the teetotalers are still purblind to the fact that these are the only truly remedial measures—of those crying evils of the drink traffic which they vainly combat, yet which still increase.\*

Since this was written one million drinkers have emigrated to America alone, which w<sub>1</sub>ll account for the decrease in the consumption of alcohol, the infants born since being non-drinkers.

They say that if we had now men of the Cobden and Bright calibre, who would lead an agitation of these principles, some happy and striking results might be expected; but they fail to see where such

are to be found amongst our public men.

If we consider the ale and spirit duties, which are the primary cause of the hideous demoralisation of the people, we do not find competent men to make wise, earnest, and united efforts to abolish those accursed duties. At the present time the personal interest of most of the members of Parliament are at one with the great brewers, distillers, and the shoal of publicans and sinners of all grades. Proprietors of house property and of the landed interest are of the same ilk; while the clergy and humanitarian teetotalers have only one idea how to effect a cure, and that is a wrong one. They strive against drunkenness, and yet the national statistics prove that it goes on increasing. The army and navy men-in and out of Parliamentare generally interested in keeping things as they are, and equally devoted to the policy of large imperial expenditure of taxation. under these discouraging conditions, I cannot refrain from expressing my heartfelt prayer and hope that the large and praiseworthy and influential body of total abstainers may soon see that by taking the principles here advocated as the basis of their movements in future, their object would be speedily gained, and the great interests of the commonwealth would be promoted beyond calculation, and thereby the welfare of the world.\*

<sup>\*</sup> For several years, our friends the total abstainers pointed to France as a sober people whose example we should follow, until the other day they had to admit that from official statistics it was proved that the French people had all the time been consuming about 50 per cent. per head more alcohol than the people of Great Britain, whom they had been stigmatising as the most drunken people in the world.

#### CHAPTER XIII.

#### RAILWAY AMALGAMATION.

"'No monopoly,' said a sunbeam, dispersing a dewdrop that was hiding in the folds of a rose."

"Monopoly is an unlawful kind of traffic, when one or more persons make themselves sole masters of any commodity in order to enhance the price."—Balley.

THE interest of the public generally, and the working classes of our large towns in particular, make it extremely desirable that the popular voice should be heard in all assemblies where railways are the subject of discussion. As this matter was some time since brought before the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, I felt myself at that time constrained to review the speeches then made by certain well-known and influential gentlemen, whose opinions, like those who hold a similar position, are too often taken for granted as reasonable, logical, and for truth. Experience, however, has taught me to look with great care, not unmixed with suspicion, on the speeches of clever men at all times, and especially when they have a direct interest in the subject they advocate, and enrich themselves by the success of the policy they espouse.

It is truly sickening to read the views put forward by respectable and well-meaning men on the above subject. The two leading speeches at the meeting (special) of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, as reported, were so eloquent and clever that I fear they carried the audience, metaphorically speaking, into deep and dangerous water; indeed, the hearers were so taken out of their depth that they were glad to reach out their hands to catch at the precious twigs (the resolutions passed at the conclusion of the meeting) held out by the speakers in order to reach terra firma in safety. The purport of this is to analyse the theory or doctrine promulgated by the two speakers.

Mr. H. Mason and Sir E. Watkin.

. Before proceeding to do so I would ask your indulgence for space to state a few very important facts in the interest of the people, or commonwealth. 1st. Let me ask how it is that this question of railways is never discussed either in Parliament or out with a view to the interest of the public, the voice of the director or the shareholder being the only one heard, and in a tone as though the public were made for the railways, and not the railways for the public? 2nd. Have we in

this country utilised the invention of railways to their utmost extent; and, if not, who prevents it? 3rd. Have the directors or managers of railways ever answered the questions raised in the pamphlets written

by Brandon, Edwards, Jones, and Tennant?

Until Sir E. Watkin has answered these pamphlets, either by word or deed, let him for ever hold his peace. It was admitted the other day in a paper read at the London Institute by the chairman of the railway clearing-house, that, given a train of the capacity for 500 passengers to be only half filled, the cost of carrying passengers is only Id. each for every thirty miles, and this, it should be noted, only half filled, what would be the cost supposing the seats were wholly filled? Seeing that the cost of carrying a full train is very little, if anything, more than that of a comparatively empty one, I may safely leave my readers to make the calculation. Mr. Mason says that he "fears, if the railways were thrown into the hands of the State, we should have a much worse master to deal with than what some people termed an overbearing and tyrannical board of directors of railways." This might be quite true, or it may be mere assumption, but perhaps Mr. Mason means we directors and shareholders, not we the public at large. Mr. Mason had been a traveller (simply) on all the lines in Great Britain, as I have been for twenty years, he would not find so much to say in favour of "railway boards and managers' accessibility to reason and remonstrance." As regards the "ebbs and flows of railway traffic," which he says is continually happening, this I understand to mean the fluctuations of trade, sometimes over much and sometimes too little; if so, who is to blame?

Under a system of low and regular charges, such as the pamphlet alluded to above recommends, the traffic would be a constant flow, or comparatively so, whereas, under the present system, the fares are only lowered in certain months and at certain intervals, under certain arbitrary and tyrannical conditions. This system is what they call excursion trains, and this brings the "ebbs and flows." When we consider the story Mr. Mason told us of the "tyrannical tradesunionism" of certain companies through working arrangements, the one charging the same rate for 70 miles as the other does for 120 miles, between Ashton-under-Lyne and Nottingham, to wit; and when we consider that these two companies are competing companies, how can we harmonise the facts with a state of competition when we see that with the same breath he condemns monopoly and advocates amalgamation? How can we appreciate his sincerity when he tells us all these things, and, in addition condemns the doctrine of State railways, both on commercial and political grounds? With the same breath he condemns centralisation and recommends amalgamation, as though amalgamation was not the first step and condition of centralisation. There is centralisation and centralisation. In dealing with an article which is common property, centralisation in the hands of a common government is good. Land and railways are common pro-

perty. As regards the benefits to be expected to accrue to the public, I will take the instance as given by Mr. Mason in speaking of the South-Eastern and the London, Brighton and South Coast, after a fight over the plunder derived from the public, like two hungry curs over a bone, "the two railway companies came to their senses, made peace, increased their fares, and, as Sir Edward told them at the time, that practically they had everything that amalgamation could give them." I fancy enough of the cloven foot will be visible in the above quotation to open the eyes of my readers as to the value to be attached to such words as monopoly, amalgamation, competition, &c., from the mouths of such able speakers. After reading the two speeches, I fancy the public will not drink very freely of this eloquence lest there should chance to be "poison in the cup." They talk of Parliamentary authority for amalgamation. No doubt it would be very pleasant to have power to despoil the public by legal authority, for what can you call it but spoliation to charge the public by legal authority a penny a mile, when it is admitted it only cost a thirtieth part of a penny a mile to carry them. Now this brings me to Sir E. Watkin's speech. Sir E. Watkin tells us "he was not there that day in any sense to oppose amalgamation. He was there simply to oppose "monopoly," and then goes on to illustrate what a monopoly is, but his definitions are not the sort of monopolies we have to complain of. What the public have to complain of is that the Government should grant legal power to certain trading and speculating companies to take and manipulate for their own special profit at the risk of loss of means and liberty to the rest of her Majesty's subjects the greater part of the Queen's highway. It does not require an Act of Parliament to establish a baker's or hatter's shop in a village or town, and inasmuch as these can establish themselves by simply opening a shop, there is no analogy; and as to the remark about being candid enough to admit "that where there was but one railway between two places it was a monopoly," did it not occur to his hearers that every amalgamation between two or more railways was equivalent to creating this kind of monopoly? If Sir Edward and his brother directors would boldly promise the public the same fares as the State railways of Belgium. particulars of which will be found in the pamphlets spoken of above, and from which I take the following extract, we could then, as an injured public, place some confidence in their future management of the great modern Queen's highway:-

### For a distance of 100 miles.

				1	ist Class.	2nd Class	s. 3rd Class.
English-Sou	th Eas	stern		•••	25s. 3d.	16s. 10d	. Šs. 4d.
Belgium	• • •	•••	•••	• • •	4s. 6d.	3s. od	. 2s. 3d.

And the latter are paying better dividends at the reduced prices than they were previous to the reductions. Such a promise on their part would be worth to the public ear, and the interest of the shareholders, ten thousand times more than all their eloquence, rhetoric and special

pleading.

Since writing the above I have had some additional experience in a case which I propose to lay before my readers as an illustration of the evil effects of amalgamations, or (as Sir Edward Watkin put it) an agreemeent "to make peace," which is "practically the same thing." By some strange coincidence this case happened on the very same companies' lines alluded to in Mr. Hugh Mason's speech-viz., the South-Eastern and London and Brighton lines. The case is this: having two little girls (granddaughters) at school in East Grinstead, I wrote to ask the matron to let them come to spend a few days with us at Hastings during the Whitsuntide holidays. Accordingly on Wed nesday in Whit-week they took a ticket and a half (return) from East Grinstead and back, second class, for which they paid 21s. 7d., the They started from distance being something under fifty-three miles. East Grinstead about 10.20 a.m., and did not reach Hastings until 3.15 p.m., being at the rate of 10 03 miles an hour, which, as regards time and expense, does not seem to be any better service for the public than they enjoyed in the old stage-coach days. Having reached our lodgings whilst we were out, we did not see them till five p.m., and what made the case seem the harder, was the fact that their return tickets were not available for more than one night to stay with us, for had they not returned the following day at two p.m. they would have had to forfeit the benefit of the return fare. Now this may be the result of "making peace" between two or more railway companies, but such a peace means war against society. Here is a case, a sample of thousands, showing how traffic is kept from the railways, for it is not likely that I should trouble the line with taking my young female friends under similar circumstances any more in tuture; and I think millions more would follow my example in this respect. If this kind of policy be part of Sir E. Watkin's "irresistible logic," I for one don't believe in it. He forgets that "the industry and the industrial life of the district" was the mother of the railway system, and that it has sprung and grown in spite of the peace-making propensities of the "first and second carriers."

The following extract from Tennant's pamphlet on railways seems to me to manifest a far sounder logic; on pp. 88 and 89 he says—"Luxuries of a past age are necessities of the present. To stop improvement in its progress is to inflict misery on the multitude. To give the benefit of progress to one class and to exclude another class is a national wrong and a fruitful source of evil. To hinder the poor from participating in the improvements of the rich is to hinder progress." Again he says, "The work of improvement is incomplete until all participate according to their means. But for this the price of participation must be brought down to the level of their means." And again, "The application of that greatest of all modern discoveries—

the locomotive steam engine—to the greatest of all human purposes, overcoming the natural impediments of time and space, was for a long time resisted and obstructed at every step, not by the humblest and most ignorant, but by the highest and reputed, the most learned in the land." Sir E. Watkin said, "They might, where there were two railways, by making them into one, create a monopoly." This is very candid on his part, but he goes on to say, "The only thing he had to complain of in regard to this amalgamation business, was, that without precautions which would keep alive an independent power, as a second carrier," &c. What, in the name of common sense, can this mean? If it means anything, it means that "precautions" ought to be taken to secure the introduction of clauses in the Amalgamation Act protecting the interests of the public; but inasmuch as the men in committee who manage these matters are generally railway directors, contractors, or large shareholders, who, though honourable and conscientious men in matters of private life, when they come together as a board or committee are supposed to lose their conscience. Who ever heard of a board with a conscience? I have seen a board who in the evening would make individual speeches an hour long in the Free Trade Hall in favour of Free Trade, and yet next morning as a board of directors they one and all go in for a monopoly in favour of their own particular railway. Therefore to consult such men in the House of Commons as to questions of railway amalgamation is something akin to the policy of consulting the fox as to how the poultry house should be constructed. Sir E. Watkın says, "Let us consider whether it was desirable to have only one customer to deal with." This is very good, but why does he not act up to this by making the fares on his lines so liberal as to attract millions. Let me advise him for the mutual benefit of all (shareholders included) to adopt the liberal policy, and he will find by experience that a small profit multiplied by millions is worth more than a large profit multiplied by hundreds. As with the penny post, so it would be with railway passenger traffic. am very much inclined to think that, assuming the traffic to increase under a liberal policy two or three fold, the surplus would be carried at as small a cost each as so many letters, inasmuch as the latter require after reaching the terminus a large staff of employes to sort and deliver them, whereas a thousand passengers, or any other quantity, deliver themselves both in and out, without trouble or cost to the rail-The question, then, is, will one balance the other? way company. Mr. Samuel Thompson, the other day, gave a statement of the results of the liberal policy adopted on the four great lines, all, without exception, having gained by it. Small as the boon was that was conceded to the masses, the response was no less than £51,313 for five weeks on one line (the Midland) over and above the receipts of the corresponding five weeks of last year This truth cannot be too often repeated. The great mistake directors and managers make is this, that they invariably look upon the traffic as an ascertained or given quantity,

making no allowance for its almost unlimited expansion under a liberal treatment. If directors and officials had to pay their fares as the public have to do, they would then be able to appreciate the situation. Sir E. Watkin then gives an elaborate list of prices, but, judging from his statistics, he must take us to be of that nature that savours of being thankful for small mercies. He does not say a word about the competition between the two great companies which, in 1851, gave us express trains between London and Manchester for 5s., and yet it is said that that was one of the best dividend years they have ever had until very lately. Then he tells us "not to throw away the advantages which we had gained, and to set up a monopoly "-"a monopoly of the State." Judging from the State management of railways on the Continent, as compared with our own hitherto, we have nothing to lose but everything to gain by transferring the monopolies of limited companies to that of the State; the former charging us 25s, for travelling 100 miles, whilst the latter only charge 4s. 6d., first-class. We are of opinion that if the management of the mail service had been placed in the hands of limited companies, as the railway system is, it would not have been found so good, a success either commercially, politically, or economically. Sir E. Watkin asks, "What is the State?" and then goes on to define it, and says, "It meant the party Government of the day, and the moment we give up the control of these means of carrying to the State we hand over the management of the railways to the party Government of the time." (He has evidently never heard the song of the Vicar of Bray.) This, we contend, is not exactly the fact, and as an illustration we point to the management of the postal service and telegraphy. The party in power will always have the rest of the members of the State, which we contend is the whole mass of the public, including the party in opposition, as a check, besides the rewards which Sir E. Watkin speaks of, to create a motive to "endeavour to excel" in serving the country well; and the moral force of public opinion will operate with tenfold force upon the servants of the State when the latter are really State servants, than when they are limited companies represented by boards who, barring providing a dividend for the shareholders and taking care of number one, own no responsibility to the public. As regards "turning over the poll-book," this is simply an absurdity under the new form of secret voting. Much more must be said in reply to other remarks of Sir E. Watkin, for it is of vital importance: especially that of pointing out the absurdity of Sir E. Watkin's remark about "the Government official turning over the poll-list before giving us an answer as to whether we should have our goods carried at the same price as our neighbours." A word or two more on this point. First, let me ask who it is that Sir Edward Watkin means to point to in the word "neighbours?" and, also, who does he include in the word "they?" if, as we are bound to understand it, the "they" means

the people of Manchester, then who are their "neighbours?" His words are these, "Were they prepared in Manchester to hand over these railways to the State?" Then he puts the answer into their mouths thus, "They admitted, if they did so, that there would be no longer competition, and they also admitted that if they did so they would, to a great extent, practically have handed over the management of railways to a party Government." Now I for one, as a Manchester man, must solemnly repudiate any such conclusions. We in Manchester recognise the whole human race as our neighbours, inasmuch as the whole human race consume our wares, and we wish (as we ought to do) that all impediments to a cheap and easy and quick intercourse both for persons and goods between us and our neighbours be swept away with all possible speed. We have tried the present system of managing our railways, and it is found to be one of the greatest impediments (next to taxing commodities) in existence. If it were party Government who gave us that system, we must call upon it to take it back again, and insist upon having a better in its place.

As regards competition, the use of that word which has been so much abused of late that it has become one of the universal baits for clap-trap. What need of competition when the tariff of all the railways in the country is fixed beforehand by a uniform and universal rate, both for goods, passengers, and parcels, according to the bulk, weight, and value of the first and last? As regards any new railways being made, this is a question that may well be left to the future; I think it would be better for the interests of the masses to have it fought out on the hustings and in the Press, than in Parliamentary Committees. My readers, I dare say, will remember that in 1864 an illustration of this fact presented itself; but lest they should have forgot it I will give the following extract from the report of the board of directors of the Great Eastern Railway at the time: "The Great Eastern Railway Company were the part promoters of a line of 134 miles in length, which had the merit of passing through a district of country peculiarly favourable for the construction of a railway, so much so that the line could be made for the small sum of £12,000 per mile. In consequence of the cheapness at which the line could be made, and for the favourable character of its gradients, the promoters stated-and their statement was not disputed-that they could run trains upon it carrying four hundred tons of coal, at a cost of one farthing per ton per mile; the result would be an actual saving in the cost of carriage, as compared with the Great Northern line of oneeighth of a penny per ton—an advantage which would be in effect equal to the repeal of the metropolitan coal tax upon all coal brought upon the proposed line." It was further shown that this line would bring the coal so much nearer to the doors of 60,000 persons resident within a given radius of the terminus than the Great Northern system. and that there would be a further saving in the cost of carriage of coal

through London of 2s. per ton. The new railway would, in fact, have supplied one million tons of coal to the eastern districts of London at an annual saving to the consumer of £167,600. It was further shown that, while this boon was conferred upon the consumer, the carriers of the coal would obtain for themselves the very handsome return of 10d. per mile more, upon each train mile travelled with the load than is now earned by the Great Northern at the existing rate. The reason of this superiority of the proposed over the existing line is this-upon the Great Northern the gradients are so steep, and the line so ill adapted for the heavy coal traffic, that each train cannot convey more than 250 tons, and the cost to the public cannot, in consequence, be less than ad. per ton per mile. Whilst the cost on the proposed new line would be \(\frac{1}{4}\)d. per ton per mile, or 33% less. It is almost incredible that at this time of day any body of men should be so thoroughly imbued with antiquated notions as to reject a project so complete in all its points purely upon protectionist grounds. Yet we find the chairman of this committee saying to the promoters, "You propose to have a railway with gradients such as no other railway in England has obtained, you can carry coal in trains of 400 tons load upon it profitably at a rate of one farthing per ton per mile; but it is not fair to other companies that you should be able to work at so low a rate. I do not see the justice of this proposition of a farthing a ton, and your Bill is rejected." So much for private monopolies granted by Parliamentary Committees. The concluding observations of the chairman are:—" If you like to carry at a farthing, having a higher maximum I do not see why you should not. At present I object to a farthing a ton, because I do not think it is fair to other companies who have not the same gradients and cannot get them." Here is a case of a railway rejected because the gradients were too good and the costs and charges too cheap. Further comment is needless. Suffice it to say, that here is a case of a public servant paid by the public for protecting the interests of the public against the introduction of private monopolies, deliberately and openly betraying his trust. We wonder if the members of the Chamber of Commerce would believe in such a doctrine as regards improvements in machinery for manufacturing purposes? It would be an insult to their common sense to suppose they would. If this be the sort of competition we are to have introduced and applied to "a wise and well-regulated system of amalgamation." I think Sir E. Watkin would do well to give us a little explanation in detail of what he means by this term, as in my opinion we should be safer in the hands of State management. I agree with Sir E. Watkin objecting to the Government buying and letting out the railways to contractors to work, and also as to "boards," for these have been tried and found wanting. As regards the price to be paid by the State to the present owners of the railways, Sir E. Watkin says, "No one would propose to take the railways away at any arbitrary price. This country would never endure that the railways should be bought but by an equitable

purchase: " and goes on to define what an equitable purchase is. which " of course would include the expectancy of profit." Now this is another phase of the Alabama or indirect principle of claims which I am not at all satisfied with, and which must receive emphatic opposition. I have some painful recollections of the times when boards of directors, contractors, gambling speculators, sharebrokers. and all the paraphernalia which the "Raven Club Papers" would designate as bulls, bears, and guinea-pigs, were playing at "ducks and drakes" with the money of those who had invested with a view to "prospective" competence for their widows and orphans. I should like to know how much of the capital is spent and lost in this way by the above-named worthies, some of them getting up worthless projects, whilst others of them were as busy buying them off at fabulous prices, only to set them at work again on the same business; others. again, rigging the markets so as to frighten the general investor abovenamed to sell out at ruinous loss, and thereby annihilating the little "expectancy of profit," which in nine cases out of ten had been the results of hard toil. "Did they then think of expectancy of profits?"

Again, as to the telegraphs, if the Government gave "twice as much for them as they were worth" through a system of jobbing, this I say ought to act as a beacon to be avoided rather than one to imitate. The character of the railway director is exemplified in a marked manner by the hint that we should have to give a thousand millions for what has cost the present owners little over five hundred millions. In the purchase of the railways there need not a penny pass. All that need to be done is to take the present stock, plant. and line at a fair valuation, assuming all their liabilities, and guarantee in perpetuity the same dividend as an honest distribution of the net revenue of the last five years would warrant on an average, and I do not see what objection there could be to making Government railway debentures do duty as bank-notes, and thereby emancipating the working-classes from the slavery of the Bank and other money monopolies. It is needless to multiply cases of high tariff charges on railways, but one for small parcels came under my own observation. I had sent me a small parcel of Couriers, and it was charged 1s. 3d. from Manchester to Hastings. This week, by my advice. I received the same number of copies in three or four parcels by post, which only cost 72d. Thus here is a case showing that Government service is 100 per cent. better than private company service, although the former have to pay the latter for conveyance of "I can suggest no better course than that which was taken on the postage question, viz., a full and complete inquiry into this proposed scheme of railway reform by a select committee of the House of Commons;" or better still, by both Houses, with power to examine witnesses and to call for the production of all necessary books. papers, and documents. I believe there is a committee now sitting, but whether they will make a "full and complete inquiry" is now the vital question. It is folly to be content with hearing only one side. Committees composed of railway directors in the House of Commons, must in the nature of things militate against the interest of the public.

This is a vital subject, and one which involves the question as to whether or not the railway system of this country is to be utilised; and not only that, it is also a question whether the railway companies are to retain their huge monopolies, and to abuse this privilege in the way they have hitherto done, by tyrannising over the public, or whether the public will take these monopolies out of their hands to work them for the mutual benefit of all classes, and by that means utilise the invention of railways to their full and logical extent, in the same way as the mail service has been utilised, and as the telegraph is now being done.

To further illustrate the fact that railways are interested in catering for the millions, and that their interests are identical with those of the public, I beg to append the following statement, showing the success of the experiment made on the four leading lines of the country since their adoption of third-class tickets by all trains except the Lancashire

and Yorkshire market trains, which are first-class only.

Receipts for the first five weeks, ending April 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th, 1872, as compared with the corresponding five weeks of last year, viz.: -

	1872.	1871.	Gain.
Midland	£430,429 agst.	£379,116	£51,313
Great Northern	224,215 ,,	206,490	17,725
London & North Western	724,608 ,,	697,417	27,191
Lancashire and Yorkshire	285,988 "	274,979	11,009

Thus we see that the shareholders have nothing to lose, but everything to gain, by adopting a liberal policy towards the public, and if the directors and managers are determined to shut their eyes

to the fact, the public ought to interfere.

A downright earnest agitation for railway reform is one of the great necessities of the age, but against which a compact body of greedy monopolists, with a great amount of capital, would be directly opposed, supported by the most energising influence of human conduct—that of selfish interest. While, on one hand, it must be acknowledged that this is a formidable fort to storm; on the other it is quite evident that in proportion to the force of the position so is the necessity for action against the enormous monopoly on public grounds. In 1862 Mr. James Hunter wrote of railways wisely and well, and his remarks cited below I fully endorse:—

"It was on this sacred battle-field of Progress that the greatest frauds, robberies, and imposition, such as were new to the world for their magnitude and turpitude, were perpetrated—perpetrated by men in black coats and shiny hats—men occupying respectable, nay superior, positions in life, frequenters of churches and chapels, and professing themselves amenable to the judgment of the God of justice

and of love. Yes! Never before in the history of our race did men, professing themselves to be followers of Christ, worshipping the Living God, so unscrupulously throw off the yoke they had erewhile assumed, and fall down and worship mammon. Need I tell the tale? It is no secret! The plunder is yet jingling in the pockets of the plunderers. The opportunities were too tempting; through the lengthy Parliamentary proceedings, in jobbing for shares, in combinations and compromises, in the system of contracting that obtained, in financial dodges of which we have heard so much, and through which it became possible for a man to amass in a few years many millions of money!"

It is the duty of the Government to place the railways on such a footing that the legitimate and illegitimate cost of these lines shall no longer be saddled on the travelling facilities of the nation; but that the railways shall be at once made national property, and be so managed that the means of travelling shall be reduced to some such 'scale of uniform rates as that proposed by Mr. Brandon, or any other low scale that should render the cost of travelling nominal only.

Mr. Brandon, Hon. Secretary of the National Railway Association, has laid before the world a most surprising theory, and backed by methodical-like figures, as to economy in railway travelling in Britain under Government management instead of the present system. I will give some of his statements and figures, hoping that my readers who are wise in statistics may examine them, and give their opinions as to their value.

1st. He states that Government should own all railways, and thus secure better and fixed interest to shareholders.

2nd. Amalgamation of all lines under Government would save 10 per cent. on the present yearly gross revenue, being a saving of £4,000,000 yearly.

3rd. Government guarantee on debenture interest would save

 $1\frac{1}{4}$  per cent.—£1,500,000 yearly.

4th. 100 miles ticket, 1st class, South Eastern Railway, costs £1 5s. 3d.; in France, 14s. 4d.; Italy, 11s. 1d.; North Germany, 10s. 5d.; Belgium, 4s. 6d. The same distance, 2nd class, South Eastern, costs 16s. 10d.; France, 10s. 9d.; Italy, 8s. 4d.; North Germany, 7s. 4d.; Belgium, 3s. 3rd class, South Eastern, 8s. 4d.; France, 7s. 11d.; Italy, 4s. 2d.; North Germany, 4s. 2d.; Belgium, 2s. 3d. 4th class, South Eastern, 8s. 4d.; France, none; Italy, 2s. 6d.; North Germany, 2s. 1d.; Belgium, none.

5th. That British railways will give ample returns for any distance, on one line of route, say Inverness to Dover, at these rates—viz., ordinary, and class, 1s., 2nd class, 6d., 3rd class, 3d., which sounds very rate follows.

nice for poor folks.

6th. That in 1867, 287,688,113 persons went by rail over 74,886,409 miles, exclusive of season-ticket holders, and paid £15,346,981, being an average of 1s. fare for each person.

7th. That the total working expenses in 1867 for passengers and

goods trains were 19,848,952.

8th. That in 1867 there were 3,924,624 passenger trains and 2,403,866 goods trains—in all 6,328,490 trains—so that the working of each train cost £3 2s. 8<sup>2</sup>4d.

9th. That the receipts in 1867 from passengers were: 1st class, £3,979,501; 2nd class, £4,935,416; 3rd class, £6,432,064. Total,

£15,346,981.

10th. That the Brighton Railway carries 1st class season-ticket holders, each trip, for 1s. 0\frac{2}{3}d., while a 3rd class passenger pays 4s. 2d.

11th. Express fares might be, any distance, for 1st class, 10s.; 2nd class, 5s.; fast trains, 1st class, 4s.; 2nd class, 2s.; 3rd class, 1s.; and ordinary trains, 1st class, 1s.; 2nd class, 6d.; 3rd class, 3d.; and district short-distance trains, 4d., 2d., and 1d., and yet allow better returns than the present fares.

12th. That as extra luggage now pays yearly £1,500,000, luggage

needing a porter might be charged yearly £3,000,000.

13th. That in 1867, 288 millions travelled by rail, of whom—

- 3	/,				~, ~,	0	<b></b>
7½ millions sho	uld cost	by exp	ress tra	ins an	avera	ge of	
6s. 8d						• • • •	£2,500,000
22½ millions by						•••	2,250,000
108 millions by						•••	2,700,000
150 millions by				avera	ge of 2	d	1,250,000
50,000 1st class s				• • •		•••	1,000,000
100,000 2nd class				•••	• • •	•••	1,000,000
Saving by amalg					• • • •	•••	4,000,000
Saving by Gover	nment gr	iarante	ee	• • •	• • •		1,500,000
Luggage return	•••	•••	•••	•••		• • •	3,000,000
Mails	•••	•••	•••	•••	•••	•••	572,358
						*	£,19,772,358
Receipts from th	ese sourc	es in	1867	•••	•••	•••	
Gain by new fare	s, &c.	• • • •	•••	•••		•••	£1,836,724

Or nearly £2,000,000, not calculating on a single traveller more than now, at our present high rates.

14th. That as at present an average only of 17 per cent. of the present seats are occupied in each train, that number additional would not add to the expense of transit.

15th. And in reply to "Lower fares won't pay," London oas at 12s. per 1,000 feet returned only 4 per cent., while at 4s. it pays 10 per

<sup>\*</sup> The seventh item above gives the total expenses of both goods and passenger trains to be £19,848,952 in 1867, which is only £76,594 over the receipts for passengers alone under the new system, thus leaving the goods to be comparatively all profit.

cent. River steamers on the Thames at 4d. were a loss, at 1d. they

pay well. And railways abroad pay from 5 to 25 per cent.

Now, if your numerous readers and their friends who travel by rail will be so good as to study Mr. Brandon's figures, and if they find them correct, will direct public attention to the wonderfully good theory he offers to us, I shall hope ere long to have the matter carried out in practice, or else consigned to the limbo of abortive schemes.

With the same object in view, I also cite the following letter treat-

ing of "Workmen's Trains and the Passenger Duty":-

#### "To the Editor of The Times.

"Sir,—The railway question is next in importance to the question of taxation as regards the public interests. I therefore venture, as an extensive traveller on the railways of the United Kingdom and the Continent, to claim space in The Times for a few remarks in corroboration of the views of your correspondent, Mr. Charles Markham, as contained in his letter in The Times of Tuesday. I concur in what he says as to the narrow-minded policy in charging excessive fares for the conveyance of passengers. When the late Sir Rowland Hill's plan was first mooted, the Legislature could only be prevailed upon at first to pass an Act reducing the price per letter from 6d. to 4d. The result was that it did not pay. But Sir Rowland persevered, and at last, when the price was reduced to 1d., the result was as we now find it, a great boon to the whole community, and a good paying operation. Of such a nature is the conveyance of passengers on rail-It is a question for calculation whether that, inasmuch as passengers deliver themselves and letters do not, it is as cheap to convey the one as the other-i.e., whether the expense of carrying out the letters does not balance the account of extra weight of passengers. This calculation I have not gone into.

"Mr. Markham states that 'it is an undoubted fact that one carriage filled with passengers, whether first, second, or third, more than pays the expenses of the train, and that two carriages filled with passengers, at the ordinary rates, will yield a net revenue of 50 per cent. upon the receipts. The ordinary third-class carriages hold 40 passengers, and, if filled, produce, at 1d. per mile, 3s. 4d. for each mile, which is more than the total cost of working the train per mile run. The above fact cannot be too often repeated in The Times, as it is of vital importance your readers should be made aware of it. second undoubted fact is that between London and Brighton, when the fare for contract (first-class) passengers was reduced from £50 to £30 per annum, the dividend was thereby much improved. Now £30 per annum for, say, six journeys per week amounts to less than a farthing a mile for first-class passengers, and the Company is bound to take them not only six times but twelve times a week if they find it suits their (the passengers') purpose to go. If

the railway companies can make it , ay to carry first-class passengers at less than a farthing a mile (and they admit that it does pay), why, in the name of common sense and justice, do they continue to charge the toiling millions 1d. per mile? Sir Edward Watkin (for self and others) would very likely reply that the third-class passenger might take a yearly ticket, and then he could travel at the same price; but we say this is not a fair answer to the question. The conditions, and the only true, just and economical conditions, are that the railway companies (especially those whose termini are amid a dense population) shall reduce the fares to a fair-paying price, such as will command the patronage of the millions, and give up excursion trains, so as to induce a traffic that will comparatively fill every train and every carriage.

"Thirdly, in illustration of this principle, we would again remark that when the steamboats on the Thames were 4d. each their dividends were almost nil, but that, when they reduced them to a 1d.,

they soon began to pay well.

"Fourthly, when the Belgian railways were charging English prices they never paid more than a nominal dividend, but soon after they were reduced—first-class, Id.; second, \(\frac{1}{2}\)d.; and third, less than \(\frac{1}{2}\)d. a mile, they began to improve their dividends, and went on improving until they reached from 10 to 13 per cent.

"Fifthly, this is a fact which may be taken as an illustration of the truth of the principle laid down in your able article in *The Times* of

Tuesday, the concluding paragraph of which says :-

"'It must be for the interest of shareholders to encourage the increase of an industrious population along their lines, and if there is little to be made on the workmen's tickets, still their wives and families must become customers of the companies, and move about at

the ordinary fares.'

"The fact is this—viz., that some 20 to 25 years ago the London and North Western introduced a system by which a station named Alderley, some 13 or 14 miles from Manchester on the way to London, was called a free station—i.e., that anyone living within a certain radius of the station, should have a free first-class ticket either for life or 21 years, at his option. The only conditions, were that he should live in a house of £50 per annum or upwards, as the head of a family, and that his ticket should not be transferable either to any one of his family or to anyone else, except the succeeding tenant Here is a case in point where the bread-winner has a of the house. free first-class ticket to travel 14 miles in and 14 miles out as often in the day as it may suit his convenience, and yet this station is now one of the best-paying stations on the greatest line in England. Now, Sir E. Watkin knows this fact as well as any one else. How is it he should ignore it in all his railway management?

"Sixthly, one of the best authorities on the railway system—viz., the Chairman of the Railway Clearing House—said in a lecture, that,

given a train with 500 passengers, the cost per train mile would be

upwards of 30 miles for 1d. for each person, if only half filled.

"Now compare this with the ordinary fares. A case in point shows that as regards price we are no better off now than in the days of stage-coaches. My, father, I well remember, paid 12s. for travelling 70 miles-viz., from Manchester to Milnthorpe, in Westmoreland. The first-class fare is now 12s. 6d. I have other facts in store, but fear I have exhausted your space.

"I am, yours faithfully,

Member of the Committee, Railway Reform Association. "Bela House, Alleyn Park, Dulwich, S.E."

Some of the most desirable results of the Government possession of the railways would be-

1st. A considerable reduction of rates, especially for passengers. and. Uniformity and harmony in arrivals and departures, so as

to prevent the annoyance of having to wait at junction stations.

3rd. All junctions, where necessary for the convenience of the public, could be made to dovetail with one another, so as to prevent the unnecessary annoyance of re-booking and changing from one company's line to another, having to walk hundreds of yards up steps and down steps, as, for instance, at the Waterloo Junction between the S. E. and S. W. companies' lines, and scores of others, which my readers can testify from experience.

There would be no excursion trains, which have often been the source of so many accidents and loss of life and property; for every train would be run at excursion prices, leaving every individual at liberty to choose his or her own time without running the risk of losing the boon of cheap trips.

This would be found a mine of wealth to the State in creating new

sources of traffic.

5th. In the nature of things, when the Customs and Excise are abolished and free commerce is the rule without exception, the wealth and population will so increase that in a few years we shall require double capacity for locomotion on all our trunk lines, and our savings will then have put us in possession of the means of doubling all those trunk lines without fear of injury to any class of the community.

Suppose the price paid to be an average dividend for the whole of the lines in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland to be five per cent., and the result of the two reforms (fiscal and railways) had been that a profit to the State, after paying the above dividends on the bonds, were five per cent. in addition; that would be an item in relief of taxation to the amount of £30,000,000 per annum; assuming that the price paid for the railway system was six hundred million sterling of capital on which the dividends were paid.

7th. This would prove the railway reform to be a greater boon

to the country than the penny post has been.

I have only to remark in conclusion that it will be a great day for the people of the United Kingdom when the railway system is vested in the State, "provided always" that the State is not "jockeyed," as in the case of the telegraph property, but makes the purchase of the several companies at the current market value. This will, of course, set aside all and everything like "prospective profits." To include in the purchase a prospective profit would be grossly unjust.

It seems monstrous that the law of the land should uphold a system or systems (for their name is legion) that fosters a condition of society in which monopolies are granted to a few men at the expense of the millions. The present generation of railway proprietors, especially those of the rank of directors, through sharp practice in rigging the market, cooking accounts, &c., have become possessed of the property at very low rates, whilst their neighbours, the small holders, the original proprietors, have either from fright or necessity been obliged to sell out at ruinous sacrifices, and now their descendants have to pay fares altogether out of reason for travelling on the very railways made by their united moneys, out of which they have been swindled by forms of law that cover the nefarious actions of great scoundrels.

It is generally considered that a Government fund, in the shape of consols, is a convenience for those who have money to invest. This being so, why not buy up the railways, and convert the purchase money into Government stock, called "Railway Stock?" and in this way the transfer could be made without finding a shilling of real cash, so that there need be no difficulty about that point. In place of the bonds being £100 each all round, there might be an arrangement made so that the bonds might do duty as Bank of England notes for amounts varying from one pound sterling upwards. This would be a great convenience, at the same time finding the circulating medium for the increased business of the country consequent on the fiscal reform herein advocated, combined with the increased traffic on the railways—the result of these great reforms.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

#### WORK AND WAGES.

"Modern majesty consists in work. What a man can do is his greatest ornament, and he always consults his dignity by doing it."

"The property which every man has in his own labour, as it is the original foundation of all other property, so is it the most sacred and inviolable."—CHARLES TENNANT.

"The sentence pronounced on man in the beginning was, 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread;' whence it appears that effort and satisfaction are indissolubly united, and that the one must be always the recompense of the other. But on all sides we find man revolting against the law, and saying to his brother, 'Thine be the labour and mine the fruits of that labour.'"—BASTIAT.

THIS important subject covers a wide field of human affairs, and has done in all ages; but in modern countries, and at the present time, all its principles and practice seem from necessity of life greatly intensified. By a little exercise of the inventive faculties most of the matters of civilisation might be brought under notice under some phase of "work and wages," without unduly straining the natural bent of things from their legitimate bias. It is, however, not my intention to take that kind of grasp of the subject, but to make some general remarks for the purpose of supplementing in some degree the four able lectures of Professor Leone Levi, delivered at King's College to an audience composed for the most part of trades' unionists; and it is upon this lecture that I would beg to offer a few remarks.

During the discussion which followed the lecture, the right honourable the Lord Mayor is reported by the Daily News to have said, as regards the argument against the accumulation of capital by individuals, that in his view "capital was all important to the present and future prosperity of England, and its accumulation in the hands of individuals could not be otherwise than productive of good to the masses. A man with a capital of eight or ten millions had it in his power to do a great deal of good with it; but supposing the money were divided equally between the population, it would be nothing; it would soon pass out of the hands of the general public into those of some other capitalist, to be utilised for some useful purpose." These words are very true providing the accumulation was effected under just and equitable laws of supply and demand. This is the way the world goes round. The question is not as to the accumulation of capital, but as to the just reward of labour. When labour and capital are free from the shackles placed upon them by the Customs and Excise.

we may then hope for something like a reconciliation between the two. His Lordship says it seems to him that "the whole question of the disputes between capital and labour depended very much on the temper of the parties concerned, and on the law of supply and demand. None of those who had heard the lecture would go into the dearest market to make his purchase." This illustration is very good as showing that they who cry loudest against piece-work, when they go to make their purchases buy everything by the piece with their wages. And his lordship also said "the price of an article depended, to a great extent, upon the price of labour." In this I also concur, but he should also have added raw material. Now with regard to supply and demand, I would venture to observe that this law is not respected by the common law of the land. The common law of the land says that the poor man shall not buy his beer and tobacco subject to that law of supply and demand, inasmuch as the law of the land places an obstacle in his way in the shape of unjust excise taxes, and so long as these excise and customs tariffs are in existence, the accumulation of capital in a few hands can never do good, but must, in the nature of things, do evil to the masses. For instance, a man and his wife and family, with £1 a week, could not get three pints of beer per day to their meals, and smoke two ounces of tobacco per week, without being subject to the burden of a tax equivalent to a 15 per cent. income tax. Surely this is an interference with the law of supply and demand, because if the working-man could buy his beer at its natural price, it would cost him one-half the amount that it now costs; and if he bought his tobacco at its natural price it would cost him one-quarter the sum that it now costs him. Suppose that a tax-gatherer were to stand at the counter till the labourer had purchased his little articles, and said, "Now give me threepence for having bought an ounce of tobacco, as tax, and give me also as tax one penny on the pint of beer;" the working-men would rise en masse against it, and there would be a revolution in a very short time. Well, now, when this burden is fixed upon the shoulders of the working-man without his knowing anything about it, he feels himself hit very hard in the high price of living, and erroneously supposes that it is his employer who deals him the blow; and in order to defend himself-or rather, in order to recoup himselfwhat does he do? He joins the trades' unions, and forces wages up to an amount that will suffice to enable him to feed and clothe and house his family. The logical result of this is that, notwithstanding it may be said the Government tax is upon, as regards number, very few articles, but inasmuch as these few articles are of general consumption amongst the masses, each labourer in whatever sphere of industry he may be engaged, will be sure to adopt that plan of recouping himself which presents itself as the most feasible, ignoring the fact that he is taxing himself as well as others, thereby aggravating the existing evils.

Let me state a case in illustration of this:—Some twenty-five years ago I gave out a contract for building ten cottages, each cottage with

one room up-stairs and one room down-stairs, each room fifteen feet square outside measure; the price I paid for building was £40 per cottage. These cottages, let at 2s. per week, paid me good interest for my money. A few months ago I invited tenders from builders for the erection of additional cottages, which were to be built upon the same plan, and the estimates were to be based upon the quantities in the cottages above mentioned. The lowest tender I received was £80 per cottage, while some ranged as high as £100, although timber is higher in price now than then, and there was then a tax of 10s. per thousand on bricks, which are now free. It follows, therefore, in order to make the same return for my outlay on the new buildings that I am deriving from the old, I must charge just double the rent, even supposing I spent but £80 in building the cottage, which was the lowest price tendered. Thus we see that the bricklayers, carpenters, joiners, and all concerned in building, are levying a tax of 2s. per week, in the item of rent alone, upon each other and upon their neighbours, in order to recoup themselves for the tax which they pay to the Government. And so it goes on in all branches of industrytailors, shoemakers, bricklayers, engineers, colliers, smiths, butchers, and bakers, and even now, although last not least, the agricultural labourers and the farmers; and all this arising, in the first instance, from the Government obstructing the process of supply and demand in the mode of raising the revenue of the country.

In concluding his lectures, the learned professor says, "He trusted that they might look more to Boards of Conciliation as a means of bringing disputes between masters and men to a settlement." He would advise the working-men to cease a quarrel with capital, to strive to make their labour more productive, sharpen their wits to strive to preserve what they had; if they did so, they might hope for "success." This is good advice, no doubt, but the first condition to secure its being acted upon is that Government be just in levying the taxes. As regards settling disputes between masters and men, I would suggest that prevention is better than cure. Under the perfect law of liberty of commerce (as a rule) disputes could not arise. For example, the professor himself tells us that of the respective numbers of persons in the question, out of every hundred there are four capitalists to ninety-

six labourers throughout the country.

Now, in the event of the taxes of the State being levied directly from the pocket of every class, in place of through the mouths of the people generally, the burdens of State could be so arranged as to fall on every class, as a rule, in proportion to their means, without injury to any. But this is a result which the professor might be specially paid for ignoring, judging from the way he invariably does ignore it. The result would be that the commerce of the country would be set free; and the logical sequence of that, in the nature of things, would be that the trade of the country would expand to its natural dimensions. There would be larger fields for the employment of capital in

all branches of industry; and in place of there being four employers to ninety-six workmen, there would be double the number—say, eight employers to ninety-two workmen in every hundred of the whole people. It might be said that this doubling of the number of employers would give an undue advantage to the workmen, that they would be harder to please than they are at present; but then we have to consider that under the new state of things we have perfect liberty of commerce, which would cheapen the price of living to all concerned, and the thousand a day increase of population would be employed at home in place of emigrating. England being, then, the safest and happiest country to live in, we should have no fear of pressure from over-population, having the whole world before us, ready to exchange services to mutual benefit, England being the chief entrepôt for the world's produce. The laws of supply and demand would then come in with their natural consequences in the rendering of better profits, and higher wages, as measured by their purchasing power, steadier and more permanent commerce, and general contentment throughout the length and breadth of the land. These are the only conditions under which the learned professor and his lordship can expect the working-men to keep their temper, and cease to quarrel with capital. His lordship may then hope to find the condition of the working-men bettered, whilst the rates of wages would be governed by natural laws of supply and demand.

It may be safely affirmed that so long as working-men see and feel the overbearing animus of masters incident to lock-outs, as a general rule, it is unreasonable to expect that the men will refrain from antagonistic unionism. Action of labour and capital under these untoward circumstances is mutual—destructive of all harmony, and the results are for the most part an unmitigated evil to the commonweal. The love of freedom and independence is quite as strong in men as it is in masters—it is as much a tradition of one as the other —but how far the temptation to gratify it in an erratic manner pertains to the employers of labour, or the employed, may be a matter of opinion. The chances are that in this first act of aggression the temptations are the strongest on the side of the masters. They have inherited a sort of prestige to dictate—an assumed prescriptive right that dates from the feudal ages, and even earlier in the history of civilisation—to do what they like, or will, with their own, so that being checkmated in the exercise of that prerogative of wealth has a strong tendency to inspire a little unreasoning resistance and obstinacy.

But be this as it may, it is plain from the said traditions that the union of one class in hostility to another must, in the nature of things, create union in the other class for self-defence. This is proved by existing facts; see the battle now being fought between the capital

and labour classes.

It is obvious as regards the well-being of the commonwealth, that this is not the sort of union for achieving the freedom and independence of the masses. In fact, it is a state of anarchy and confusion; yea,

it is a state of disunion—it is a house divided against itself.

Whilst we are meddling and muddling by legislative enactments with all the private affairs of the people, and plundering and blundering to the tune of taking 3s.  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. out of the pockets of every housekeeper to every 1s. we put into the coffers of the national revenue, besides preventing numerous other shillings from flowing into the pockets of said housekeepers, we are turning up the whites of our eyes at the malappropriation of the miserable pittance subscribed by the masses to provide for a rainy day or to bury their dead. Verily our statesmen are "straining at a gnat whilst they are swallowing a camel." Whilst they are passing laws to prevent abuse of trust in small matters, they are robbing the industrial classes wholesale by unjust taxing laws.

Mr. Halliday, at the great meeting at Manchester, said that "the trade of this country had not been driven away by combinations, but it had been driven away from it because the artisans had had to pay more for their food, and as a consequence the employer had had to

pay more for his labour."

It follows as a logical sequence that there is a common enemy attacking both the interests of capital and labour, and as these two interests comprise the interests of every individual of the community, there can be no necessity for hesitation in uniting as one man both capital and labour classes for one common object—viz., the annihilation of that common enemy.

Who or what is this common enemy?

The Times correspondent throws some light on this problem in the outer sheet of this day (June 30, 1874). He says, speaking of the farm labourers' lock-out, "But then there is the beer. In Suffolk, almost every cottager brews at home, and the Stradbroke peasantry, like their neighbours, have a copper in which to brew," &c. Again he says, "And experience enables me to bear witness that throughout Suffolk the peasant has a beer-cellar, and that the malt tax comes straight to it." This is the common enemy showing himself in the peasant's beer-cellar.

There is hope for society when the *Times* writes thus. Again he says, "From each bushel of malt the careful wife reckons to make about ten pails, or thirty gallons, or at a cost of a fraction over 3½d. per gallon, even with the duty on malt—i.e., reckoning the bare duty; but the cost would be, when the malt duty is repealed, 2½d. per gallon; and this I can bear testimony to, that it is an exhilarating and refreshing beverage, without being intoxicating, as I have been used to it in my youth.

"It will be said that the malt tax does not prevent home-brewing, and if they can brew at home to cost them only 3½d. per gallon, why do they go to the public-house and pay 2d. a pint for

poisoned and adulterated stuff?

"There are several reasons in explanation of this phenomenon. First, the malt tax has ruined four-fifths of the small maltsters, and so concentrated the business by throwing the malting trade into the hands of a few large brewers and capitalists as to make it difficult

for a labourer to get his bushel of malt.

"Second, the farmer cannot now, as of old, send his sack of barley to the malt kiln, and get in return a similar sack of malt in exchange, from which to allow his labourer to take a bushel for his home-brewed ale. Thus the small home-brewing utensils have gradually been allowed to fall into decay simultaneously with the

decay of the small malt kilns.

"But the husband grieves that so much has to come from so little, and blames the malt tax, which deprives him of strength and quality," whilst the droughty season is preventing the poor being supplied with pure water almost all over the country, the malt duty is taking from them the last resource, viz., pure and unadulterated table beer, which, as regards intoxicating power, is no stronger than preserved water in any other form."

The moral here pointed to is, that the only union that is destined to succeed in ameliorating the condition of the labourer and artisan is

a union of employer and employed to untax their food.

Mr. L. Jones, in an excellent article in the Bre-Hive, winds up in a very significant postscript in reply to Mr. Samuelson's letter in the

Times on the shipwrights' strike.

He does not dispute the fact stated by Mr. Samuelson, that the wages of the artisans of Toulon are from 3s. to 4s. 6d. per day of eleven hours, "but what then," says he, "how does the moral point? Should the working-men of England make their day eleven hours, and only charge 3s. to 4s. 6d. for it, or should the French people be memorialised not to build ships, and the Belgians petitioned not to go into the carrying trade?" This of course would be ridiculous; but says he again, "Will Mr. Samuelson tell our English artisans what they ought to do under such circumstances?"

With a sort of forlorn hope in inaugurating a movement of this character, I made strenuous exertions in August, 1874, in company with others, to form a free-trade league that should not belie its name; a report of which appeared in the public papers under the heading of "Free Breakfast-Table." I cannot better explain that object than by giving that report. The first meeting held at the Rainbow Tavern,

Fleet Street, of a few working-class leaders and others:—

"I have invited you to meet me to confer on a question, the most vital of all question that the human intellect can conceive—the amalgamation of the interests of capital and labour, and harmonising the same with those of the commonwealth. The question is, how best to proceed in our efforts to bring about a universal peace between the capital and labour classes.

"It has occurred to me very frequently that Mr. Fawcett was

right when he said 'Ministers never originate any new idea; they

never lead, but are always led by public opinion.'

"This being the case, our course is clear; we have nothing further to do than to try what can be done for the reconciliation of the capital and labour classes with a view to bring to bear their combined power for the instruction of our (so-called) great statesmen.

"If we put real statesmen into power by our votes, we may then hope to have men who will feel ashamed to lag behind, and who will endeavour to take the lead, and rather instruct public opinion, and root out old abuses without waiting for the voice of clamour, the

promptings of misery, starvation, and discontent.

"Bastiat characterises the policy of taxing commodities as 'legal plunder.' He says, 'lt is absolutely necessary that this legal plunder question should be determined, and there are only three solutions of it:—

"' 1st. When the few plunder the many.

"'2nd. When everybody plunders everybody else.

"'3rd. When nobody plunders anybody.'\*

"Now it is amongst these we have to take our choice.

"I hope we shall determine upon the third, and I am now before you to ask your co-operation in order to utilise the trades-union organisations both of labour and capital, and get both to join hands for the purpose of attacking the common enemy by all legitimate means.

"It is for you to say if such a consummation be probable.

"Then, as to the ways and means. Is it possible that before the next general election such arrangements could be made as would enable the people in every borough to understand the way how to put the following test-questions to each of the candidates without regard to party, viz., 'Are you in favour of a Free Breakfast-Table?' 'If elected, will you initiate a measure for the abolition of all taxes on commodities, and substitute for them a direct tax on realised property, or in the event of any other M.P. doing it, will you support him?'

"If there be any difficulty in the minds of any of you as to the justice and wisdom of this mode of levying the taxes, I shall be glad to answer any question, or refer you to undoubted authority for a

solution.

"My opinion is, that it is infinitely better to get property to recognise its duty and do it, than to try and root up and destroy the rights of property which in all old countries are so deeply rooted as to defy all the powers that the human intellect could invent to prevent a bloody revolution. And this is what the Land Tenure Reform Association is making an effort to bring about; would that we could enlist their sympathy for our plan as the only practical one founded

<sup>\*</sup> See Chapter on Law, page 29, Bastiat's "Essays on Political Economy."

on justice, morality, and sound policy. I now lay before you the analysis of a week's consumption of taxed articles for a family consisting of man, wife, and three children, one of the latter being eighteen years of age, as an average family, with £1 a week wages:—

		Price. 2 6 1 8		Amount.	Actual duty.		Amount hidden in price which never reaches the Treasury.	
				s.` d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Te'a, 4 oz., at	•••	2	6	o 7½	0	$I^{\frac{1}{2}}$	О	3
Coffee, ½ lb., at	•••	1	8	0 10	О	I	0	2
Sugar, 3 lb., at	•••	0	4	I O	0	I	0	43
Beer, 21 pints, at	•••	0	2	36	0	5	I	4
Tobacco, 2 oz., at	•••	0	4	ο 8	0	5	0	1
							-	
				6 6 <sup>3</sup>	1	1 7	2	$2\frac{1}{2}$

thus showing that out of a consumption of taxed articles to the amount of 6s. 6½d. he is made to bear a burden of actual duty, 1s. 1½d., and a monopoly tax of 2s. 2½d. in consequence of such duty; total burden, 3s. 4d., or about 16 per cent., or what is equivalent to 16 per cent., of an income tax, or about £9 per annum per family.

"Whereas if he lives in a house of £5 a year rent under the proposed budget (the free breakfast-table), his entire taxes will not be more than £1 per annum, and if over £5 and under £10 a year, £2 per annum tax, and so on up to £10 per annum tax. See People's

Blue Book,' 355.

"In addition to the above burden there are others, which although they are collateral and unseen, they nevertheless have a tendency to bear more heavily on the shoulders of the working classes than those who are well off. For instance, the famine prices for butchers' meat and other dairy produce, and the coal famine to wit.

"Taken altogether, directly or indirectly the State taxes take from

the labourer one-third of his wages at least."

These simple and just principles of taxation are wilfully and wickedly set aside, or stupidly ignored, by our leading statesmen, and notably by Mr. Lowe, the Chancellor of Mr. Gladstone's so-called Liberal Government. In proof of this fact 1 need only refer to that Chancellor's and that Government's matchless Match-tax Budget, as conclusive of their folly or wickedness, or a vile compound of both infamous elements in the minds of ministers of state versus statesmen.

I refer to the Budget of April, 1871, when the Gladstone Government was befooled to the top of its bent by its blatant partisans, and persuaded that they were too mighty to be touched by the Nemesis that rules those who "wax fat and kick;" that infatuation quickened the power that kicked them from place and plunder, and the exercise

of authority most wickedly applied. Of that matchless folly too much cannot be said in condemnation, for it was one of the most cruelly unjust attempts of the strong in purse and power to oppress the weak and poor that has ever disgraced the history of this kingdom. The opinions which I then expressed are now deemed equally true, and worthy to be re-affirmed in these pages, as a loop-hole for future historians to look at those matchless ministers of match-tax notoriety

### MATCHLESS FOLLY.—THE BUDGET.

It has been suggested that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer shall hereafter bear the cognomen of "Lucifer Lowe." What could be more apropos? By this match duty Mr. Lowe has proved himself no better than (politically speaking) either a fool or a knave, or something that includes both, and all other things too horrible to mention.

If he cannot see that all such taxes are calculated to grind the face of the poor in more ways than one, but especially so far as they tend to limit the means of honest employment for the poor, such blindness

proves his consummate folly.

If, on the other hand, he does see the nature of these taxes, and in spite of such knowledge he places "the last straw on the back of the animal," then, we contend, he is worthy to be called despot, tyrant, oppressor of the people, knave. Now, in using such strong language, it must be distinctly understood that we have no personal or party grudge; we simply follow the dictates of what we, in our conscience, consider is for the interest of the commonwealth, not only of England, but humanity. It may be that he alone is not responsible, but that the whole ministry must hear the blame. Granted; but we must not forget that where there is a gang of deceivers the cleverest amongst them is generally the leader, hence Mr. Lowe is the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

We have not time to wade through the whole of the speeches on the occasion, but would particularly call the attention of working-men to the following extract from Mr. McLaren's speech on the Budget:—
"He would not repeat the observation that a Government which could not conduct the affairs of this country on less than £72,000,000 was unworthy of confidence; but he was sure that a Government which spent that amount would gradually lose the confidence of the country; and members who helped the Government to incur that expenditure would fall under the displeasure of the great body of their constituents.\* The present Census would doubtless show that there were six and a half million families in this country, and thus every family was called upon to pay £11 for the support of the Government."

<sup>\*</sup> The "next election" which came in 1874 gave us unmistakable proof that the unerring instinct of the electors had been smitten with this retrograde policy, by sending to Parliament such men as would hurl from power the men who had deserted their flag of Free Trade.

Now, it would be very desirable, and we intend to give to our leaders a list of the names of the 201 who voted for this *infernal* tax, and also those forty-four who voted against it, in order that the working classes may know whom it is they must support in the next election.

Then, again, the flippant way, the vulgar wit, the eloquent flow of words, with which he introduces this narrow-minded legislation, sur-

passes the cleverest card-sharper, conjuror, or thimble-rigger.

We shall probably hear a great deal about obedience to constituted authorities, and most likely from the very men who applaud resistance when it falls in with their own views. But we must remember that when constituted authorities go against a higher law, the sin rests with them, and not with those who resist; not that we advise resistance to the law when this measure does become law. "Magna est veritas et prævalibit."

One member (Mr. Anderson) said "that at the present rate of consumption the tax would produce £1,250,000, whereas Mr. Lowe had calculated upon realising £600,000 only." This fact proves one of two alternatives, which he must have foreseen, viz., either that this industry must fall off to the extent of 100 per cent., or that the realising of the

£,600,000 must cost 100 per cent. in the operation.

This reminds us of the old proverb, "Wilful waste brings woeful want," which holds good as to nations as with individuals. Again, Mr. Anderson says, "But if the tax should be found to be exceedingly disagreeable he should not regret it, because it wanted something of that sort to rouse the people to the iniquitous system of our taxation." We heartily concur in this observation. Why have we no champions in the House with moral courage enough to denounce the system of taxing commodities? Is it because an income and property tax will compel the rich man to pay an amount in accordance with his riches. and the poor man in accordance with his poverty. The principle is unjust which makes the payment of taxes depend upon the amount of meat and drink a man can consume, be it luxury or necessary. Your Rothschilds, your Barings, and other noble lords and millionaires, with all their capacity of consumption, can consume but a very little more per head of taxable commodities than a working-man with a guinea a week; the latter, to live comfortably with, say self, three children, and wife, must pay at least 3s. weekly, under the present system. The Marquis of Westminster, with 6,000 guineas a week, in order to pay in proportion, would require to keep 18,000 consumers of taxable articles under his roof.

Moreover, the poor man is now paying 15 per cent. (or one-seventh of his income); whereas under a system of direct taxation he need not pay more than  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and the rich man the same, in order to raise a revenue of £68,000,000 per annum on the principle of the model Budget.

It may be said that profits on labour, skill, and industry, should

bear a less percentage than realised property, such as landed estates, Government stock, &c. This is a debatable point for Parliament to settle; but let us, for the sake of honour and justice, emancipate ourselves from that policy which bears within it the germs of civil war—viz., the policy of taxing commodities.

The Model Budget may be called the poor man's, inasmuch as it not only relieves him from the half of the present burden of the taxes of the country, without increasing the burden of any other class, but it

is the means of increasing the demand for labour.

It is also the employers' budget, inasmuch as it will tend to increase trade to such an extent as to satisfy everyone that a live-andlet-live policy is not only possible but absolute fact. It is the Budget of the rulers of the people, inasmuch as it secures peace and plenty, and the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers. It violates none of Nature's laws or laws Divine, and secures the affections of the people to their rulers, which may safely be said to be a greater guarantee for peace than standing armies and ironclad fleets. Mr. Lowe again displays his ignorance in a most marked manner as regards principles of political economy, when he holds up the fiscal system of America as a model to be imitated by us; he could not have selected an industry that shows this more glaringly than the match trade, for, as Bryant and May say (in the Standard of Monday), that in America the state of that trade is simply this-" Wax matches are not made at all, and the wooden matches are of the very lowest description." When Mr. Lowe takes the American system of taxing commodities to be the cause of America's prosperity, he simply takes good for evil, and evil for good.

This subject is intimately connected with what is called a free breakfast-table, which means also freedom from taxation for everything that we consume at all our meals. This is not a party question, and I will point out how the manufacturers are more directly interested

than anyone else, and how it bears upon the question.

1st. We have to consider the movement for bettering the condition of the workers in the factories; this means enhancement of wages in (direct) money value, or shortening of working hours, which is the same thing in another shape.

and. The free breakfast-table means the repeal of the duty on tea,

coffee, wine, spirits, and malt.

3rd. Our cousins across the Atlantic, although ardent protectionists, are going in for the repeal of the above duties. They reason thus on the subject (and very sound reasoning too, as far as it goes, but very illogical and inconsistent so long as they retain any duties on commodities at all). They say, "Why should we handicap our work-people in making these articles of consumption artificially dear, so long as they are articles we do not produce at home in any quantities? It only tends to give them (the artisans) a good reason for asking higher wages, and thereby handicaps us as manufacturers in our

race with European competition in the markets of the world; not that we object to high wages, but that cheapening living is equivalent to raising wages, and high wages brings us European workers

ready made."

4th. It is a very significant phenomenon to find protectionists advocating Free Trade in the interests of protection, and this is what is at this moment being done across the Atlantic by the manufacturing members of the Senate (and they will carry it out). Whilst it is as great an anomaly to find the same class of (so-called) free traders ignoring the question altogether amongst ourselves.

5th. It is equal to an advance of 3s. 4d. per week, or 15 per cent., on the wages of a man at a guinea a week to repeal the above

duties.

6th. It can be done without injury to any class, person, or party in

the State, and with infinite benefit to all.

In the best interests of the working classes, I wrote to the Right Hon. John Bright on this great and important subject of a free breakfast-table, and although in some respects my language may be called stern and uncompromising, I have felt the necessity of plain speaking, but I had not then, nor have I now, any other feeling than admiration of his great talents—now mingled with regret that he has not continued to use them actively in promoting the same noble cause that so eminently distinguished his earlier career as a Free Trader:—

## "TO THE RIGHT HON. JOHN BRIGHT, M.P.

"Sir,—I have read your last speech with a great deal of care and anxiety, hoping to find in it some allusion to the 'free breakfast-table' for the people, but was doomed to disappointment; not a word was

uttered about it.

"Ever since September 28th, 1843, until the day you accepted a place in the Cabinet, I had (as a fellow-worker in the cause of Free Trade) done honour to your name, and was ready to follow you through fire and water, if needs be, for the promotion of the cause, but when I saw you taking office without stipulating for a 'free breakfast-table,' I began to doubt whether you had not by so doing committed political suicide, and judging from your last speech, I fear my doubts are too well founded. Since reading it I have taken to looking up my first volume of the Anti-Corn Law League, and I regret to find the Right Hon. John Bright of the present day is a very different Free Trader to the John Bright of 1843.

"On the 28th of September, 1843, at the Covent Garden Theatre, John Bright is reported to have said, on the question of 'Free Trade, What is it?'—'They all know that there were many men (members of the aristocracy) who had considerable sympathy with their operations; there were several who subscribed to their funds. Why would

not such men come boldly out in greater numbers, and show what side they were really on—"the just or the unjust?" Let them rest assured that the time must soon come when they must so declare themselves. They (the League) were not only corn-law repealers, but Free Traders in the widest sense of the word. They believed that Free Trade would bless the world, and would specially bless this country. They wanted to have the question settled for the world as well as for England.'

"Again, in the same speech, he said, 'We would stand between these helpless beings and their oppressors; between the heartless selfishness of monopolists and the victims they would relentlessly

trample on.'

"Mr. Cohden on the same occasion said:—'What is Free Trade? Why, breaking down the barriers that separate nations—those barriers behind which nestle the feelings of pride, revenge, hatred, and jealousy, which every now and then burst their bonds and deluge whole countries with blood (those feelings which nourish the poison of war and conquest, thinking that without conquest we can have no trade), which fosters that love for conquest and dominion, which sends forth your warrior chiefs to scatter devastation through other lands, and then to return enthroned secure in your passions to harass and

oppress you at home.

""Speaking figuratively, these were the days when giants lived as statesmen compared with the pigmies of the present day, judging from the frivolous and vexatious questions which are brought forward to the exclusion of that vital question, Free Trade. I am convinced that when Mr. Gladstone put the question to you of joining his Cabinet, had you answered him in something like the following strain: 'If I am to join your Cabinet, it must he as Chancellor of the Exchequer, with full power to give the country that free breakfast-table which you and I have been promising so frequently during our election campaign as another instalment of that Free Trade which I have almost spent a lifetime to accomplish'—I say, if this had been your reply, we should now be enjoying the free breakfast-table—if not also a free dinner and supper-table—and your memory would have stood on a loftier and more durable pedestal than that of any mortal man ever since the world began.

"There is now the fourth edition of the 'People's Blue Book' out, by Charles Tennant, Esq., which brings the facts and figures down to the latest date, showing the importance of the question of Free Trade. With this book in your hand, you might work in a few months a greater revolution in a peaceful way than even the repeal of the Corn Laws, seeing that you have the power to command the ears of the

people and the pen of the press.

"THOMAS BRIGGS."

# CHAPTER XV. MATTERS RELATING TO LAND.

"Commerce tends to wear off those prejudices which maintain distinctions and animosities between nations. It softens and polishes the manners of men. It unites them by one of the strongest of all ties—the desire of supplying their mutual wants. It disposes them to peace, by establishing in every State an order of citizens bound by their interests to be the guardians of public tranquility. As soon as the commercial spirit acquires vigour, and begins to gain an ascendant in any society, we discern a new genius in its policy, its alliances, its wars, and its negotiations."— Dr. ROBERTSON.

"Look at your country and be a patriot: look at the nations of the earth and be a philanthropist."—M. MARTYR.

"Do you desire to know the condition of a people? Ask not, how they are governed, but, how they are employed."—BASTIAT.

THE Financial Reform Association of Liverpool gives us twelve reasons for a revision of the land tax.

Ay Act 4 William and Mary (1692), c. 1, s. 4, it was enacted, in very stringent and precise terms, that there should be paid "unto their Majesties" a tax of 4s in the pound upon the full, true yearly value, at a rack rent, of lands, houses, mines, tenements, and hereditaments, as also of mines of all kinds, iron-works, salt springs and works, parks, chases, warrens, woods, coppices, fisheries, and, in short, on all real property whatsoever, with a proviso that no deduction or abatement from the full rack rent "in respect to reparations, taxes, parish duties, or any other charges" should be allowed; which tax of 4s. in the pound, heavy as it may now appear, was a very moderate, and indeed wholly inadequate compensation, for the original feudal charges and duties to which the holders of all such property were liable up to 1660, when the Convention Parliament abolished them altogether, and gave to King Charles II. and his successors, in exchange, "Excise duties for ever." There is strong reason to believe that the assessment made in execution of this Act was never very rigorous or impartial; but such as it was, a Parliament of landowners always contrived to avoid any revision thereof until 1789, when by Act 29 George III., c. 6, the contribution was made permanent, at the sum which it produced in 1692, a subsequent Act, the 38th of George III., fixing the quota to be paid by each parish or division, so that in no case should it exceed 4s. in the pound.

We contend that this manifest evasion of the true intent of the

law of 1692 ought now to be remedied, and that the land-tax should be RE-ENACTED and RE-ASSESSED, and for the following reasons:—

I. Because, with the exception of Crown or State reserves, the lands of this country were parcelled out at the Conquest on feudal conditions, the grantees being bound to render military service, both in person and by their dependents, in numbers according to the extent of their holdings or land, and to provide them with arms, horses, and provisions; and also to make heavy payments to the Crown on occasion of births, marriages, &c. From these and other heavy burdens successive Parliaments of landowners, every man of whom, according to the late General Perronett Thompson, "had taken a solemn oath that he had a personal pecuniary interest in the question," have gradually relieved themselves, not merely without giving the public any equivalent, but throwing their own proper burdens upon the shoulders of industry, trade, and the non-landholding community. It is high time that this gross injustice should be redressed.

2. Because rent grows, and is, in fact, created by the public, viz., by the growth of trade, wealth, and population, and that which the nation has created the nation has a right to share in by taxation; at all events, so far as the public necessities may require.

3. Because rent is the only kind of property which can be taxed without interfering with the production of wealth. "Both ground rents and the ordinary rent of land are a species of revenue (says Adam Smith, Book V., chap. ii.), which the owner, in many cases, enjoys without any care or attention of his own. Though a part of this revenue should be taken from him in order to defray the expenses of the State, no discouragement will be given to any sort of industry." Evidently it can make no difference whatever to a tenant whether he pays the landlord or the tax-gatherer. The less the taxation, the more the rent, and vice versa; but the total will not be affected by the proportion paid to each.

4. Because a tax upon rent is more easy to ascertain accurately,

more difficult to evade, and cheaper to collect than any other.

5. Because it is admitted by the Earl of Derby and other land-holders that the land of Englanddoes not produce more than one-half as much food as it ought to do; and the most efficient, if not the only means to compel the landholders generally to do their duty to their estates and to the public, is to tax them soundly, that they may be driven by necessity to cultivate and make the land yield more produce, and, therefore, more rent.

6. Because the receivers of rent usually live in idleness upon the fruits of other people's industry: and it is monstrous that industry should be burdened that idleness may go free. Those "whose recognised function is that of handsomely consuming the rents of England, shooting the partridges of England, and, as an agreeable amusement (if purchase-moneys and other conveniences serve),

dilettante-ing in Parliament and Quarter Sessions for England,"\* must

verily be made to pay their due share of the taxes at least.

7. Because, since trade and manufactures, or, in other words, profits, are the mother of rent and wages, it is only necessary to allow these to grow and develop freely to increase rent and wages also, to an indefinite extent; rent is a tree which must be pruned to make it fruitful, and to shift the burdens naturally attaching to it upon trade and industry is simple killing the goose which has laid all the

golden eggs of the landholders.

8. Because, while everybody acknowledges the vast benefits derived from the scanty measure of Free Trade enjoyed in these islands, perfect freedom, or any material approach thereto, can only be attained by the total abolition of Customs and Excise duties, and of such stamps and assessed taxes as interfere with employment, production, or exchange; and this is only practicable by imposing the main weight of taxation upon realised property, in the first instance; all which, however, the owners would speedily recover, through the increased wealth of the nation, and the consequent rise in the value of their land. It may safely be asserted that not one day's profitable work is done in this United Kingdom which does not raise the value and the rent of land.

Because the House of Commons, still principally composed of landholders, has long since abdicated its proper function of steward of the nation's purse, and not only makes no attempt to check extravagance and reduce taxation, but notoriously assists and stimulates ministerial and departmental lavishness; and the only possible way to bring it back to vigilant economy is to tax the rich heavily enough to make honourable members feel that in voting away the public money they are voting away their own.

10. Because it is plainly more just and reasonable, in any civilised and Christian country, that the rich should be taxed to spare the poor, than the poor to excuse the rich, as is the case at present. are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves," says St. Paul; but landholders, in Parliament assembled,

have red the text backwards.

II. Because, to raise the bulk of our revenue from land and other realised property is the old approved, constitutional plan of this nation, in reverting to which we are only standing upon the ancient ways, and being guided by the wisdom of our ancestors like true Conservatives.

12. Because taxes upon trade of every kind are the barbarous contrivance of a barbarous age; a sort of black-mail, devised when honest industry was a disgrace, and war and fighting the only honourable occupations; they are consequently a badge of degradation worn like

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a serf's collar by commerce and manufactures, besides waging ceaseless and bitter war against the free intercourse of nations, and theretore against peace and civilisation, and are thus a solecism and anomaly in an age of steamers, railways, and telegraphs. But the abolition of this long-standing disgrace to modern intelligence is only possibly by the taxation of real property.

Another illustration of matters relating to land and its tenure is given by Macleod, and the legal, moral, and political points demand

study.

Macleod says:—"The feudal system of tenure had been introduced before the Conquest, but William I. assumed the absolute property in all the lands of England to the Crown except the Church lands and the county of Kent. He made a composition with the men of Kent to maintain their ancient customs, so that land in Kent remained as formerly, divisible among the family. The conqueror granted out to his followers certain rights of use and enjoyments in certain lands, and these rights were denominated 'estates.' But those who engaged them and were bound to render certain services in return were never called owners or proprietors, but always tenants. Thus we always speak of the tenures of lands, and all rights to use and enjoy lands are called tenures.

"So Littleton speaks of tenants in fee simple, tenants for life, tenants at will, tenants by copy, tenants for term of years, joint tenants, tenants in common, tenants by grand serjeantry, &c.; and these persons were strictly tenants, because they were only permitted to hold these lands on the express condition of performing certain services to the Crown, which, if they failed to do, they were strictly liable to forfeiture as a modern farmer or tenant would be for non-

payment of rent.

Here we are face to face with the primary condition of the owners and holders of land, and the wrongs that have been from time to time perpetrated by the latter. They have usurped all the rights as personal which helonged to the Crown, and thrown off the duties upon which those rights rest. In addition to this, in process of time that class of the community became the makers of the laws, and being selfish tyrants without a sense or common honesty, they imposed taxes on the people—the creators of wealth of the very land held by those tyrants, to meet the requirements of the Imperial Government, and thereby secured their own unjust immunity from the performance of those very duties they had solemnly sworn to discharge.

The land tax as it now stands, with all its enormous fraud on the people, was their act and deed. Why is it a fraud? Because when the state of society changed the condition on which land was held of the Crown—i.e., personal service was not required—the equivalent was not paid by the holders of land as it ought to have been in justice, but it was levied on the people, and the duties of the original tenure were unfulfilled. The letter and spirit thereof were alike set at

defiance, and the consequence is that land has been thrown out of

tillage into primitive pasture to a fearful extent.

There is, however, another evil that has been during this century gradually growing in magnitude and consequence, and which is pressing sorely on the people, and especially the agricultural labourers. I refer to the stupid, almost insane system of throwing arable land into pasture. "The neglect of tillage during the present generation is working the nation evil, and evil only, and this state of things is all the more fatally so, because there is a growing and already wide-spread delusion that making this country pastoral is practical wisdom, whereas it is insane folly. It is contrary to every principle of enlightened agriculture, political economy, and national prosperity. The repeal of the malt tax, and all Customs and Excise laws, would do much to correct these evils.

This insane folly of our landowners and farmers generally was ably pointed out by Mr. Rufus Usher, in a series of letters in the Banbury Guardian, thirty-three years since while writing on the absurdity and injustice of the malt tax, and which letters were at the time all copied into the Mark Lane Express. In the fifth letter of the series he said, "I beg to refer the reader to the gradual decrease of tillage which has been taking place in this country for the last seventy years, through the whole period in which we have been importers of The year 1773 it is which definitely marks the era when Great Britain ceased to export and began to import the most valuable products of her own soil, and it is as definitely that which marks the decline of tillage. I believe it is not generally known to how great an extent cultivation has retrograded in this country; indeed, from the opportunities I have myself had of testing public opinion on this subject, it is very commonly believed that more land was never in tillage than now. Did no other proof offer itself than what may be obtained from daily experience and observation, enough remains to present so palpable a truth from becoming a controverted question. Examine the upland pastures that environ the villages in this, or in almost every other district in the kingdom, and you will find most of them lying in well-sloped ridges the work of generations that have passed away. The pastures the most contiguous to the villages afford the most frequent and indubitable proofs of this backward movement. Those very localities which our forefathers cultivated with success, those scenes where the busy ploughman passed his days undisturbed by care and fearless of want, where the ploughboy as happy whistled away the hours of toil in careless yet contented mood, those fields where the frugal and industrious housewife gleaned her little store of corn, are now forsaken save by the toil-worn peasant, who now and then with sullen steps paces unheard across the tufted sward to tend his flock, or a lonely traveller, perchance, wends his way towards the quiet hamlet. It may be fairly inferred from positive evidence on the one hand, and corrohorative testimony on the other, that not less than eight or nine million acres of land which were under tillage previous to the year

1773 have been taken back to pasture."

Here is a proof of far-seeing intelligence of a person who was then practically engaged on land—a gentleman who is still so engaged, and in addition to general farm tillage, is successfully cultivating on his own soil most important medicinal plants—and also, meanwhile, delighting his friends and edifying the public by publishing essays, that charm the elegant and refined.

This disastrous folly of changing tillage lands for pasture has continued from that time to the present, the malt tax and other Excise and Custom duties having thrown out of cultivation no less than 10,000,000 acres of land in Ireland alone. The abolition of these imply the destruction of all the barriers which interpose obstacles, preventing the mutual exchange of products that are absolutely necessary for feeding the industrious bees in the hive of humanity.

At the "Midland Farmers' Club" held this year—April 6th, 1877—Mr. Mechi gave an address, in which he stated—and we require no higher authority—that "the farmed area of the United Kingdom was 47,398,450 acres, but only 6,000,000 acres were available for our bread, vegetable, and beer." He was, he said, "convinced that 24,000,000

acres of pasture was a great mistake."

I find, from the authority of Mr. Usher, that in 1847 England had 10,252,800 acres of arable and garden land. Hence, from that time up to 1873, we had in our so-called enlightended agriculture thrown out of tillage 4,252,800 acres; yet our mouths have nearly doubled since that date. This, if taken as the average, gives since that year an additional 1,085,000 acres to pasture, and it certainly has not been This system is certainly a war against food, therefore against humanity. It is a war against the means of living-diminishing the production of bread and meat at the fountain head, while the mouths to consume are increasing many per cent. per annum. It is driving that labour from the nation which creates its wealth, its strength, and There is no escaping the conclusion that this system its security. when laid bare is cruel and vindictive, or stupid and insane; hence, if it should continue for a few years—a very few—the ruin that it will produce will be the cause and justification of a revolution.

To stave off that disaster, a vigorous return to the tillage system of our ancestors is indispensable—nay, imperative. At the present time we have reached a condition full of peril. A hundred and fifty years since, England was able to supply all her children with bread and to export of her abundance, now we have to import three parts out of five to fill them; having reduced our tillage full half, while our mouths have nearly doubled in a generation. To curtail the production of food by law or usage is to take direct steps to debase and destroy the nation, and to be dependent on a foreign supply when we have an affluent abundance of the raw material given us by the bounty of God

in the soil of our native land to produce enough and to spare, is the

very insanity of ignorance and folly.

It seems to me a fatal delusion—almost judicial blindness—to shut our eyes against the teachings of these stern and momentous facts. The landowners—that is substantially our two Houses of Parliament—have a heavy responsibility resting on their shoulders that will, if not speedily grappled with in the spirit of wisdom, knowledge, and justice, soon engender a spirit in the millions of the people far easier to prevent from becoming rampant with retaliation, than soothed and governed, when verging on revolution gaunt with destitution and fierce with hunger.

We call ourselves a nation of Free-Traders, yet after forty years we may well ask with propriety, in the spirit-stirring language of Mr. Usher, addressed to Members of Parliament:—"Have you struck off the fetters which have bound down your lands to barrenness and subjected the labourers on your estates to hunger and wretchedness? Is the man who will acquiesce in the -principles of Free Trade, on the grounds of cheapening food, and at the same time bar out the fertilising light of the sun from his own estate, to be believed? Certainly not. He is still the enemy of the people—and befriends and supports that condition that makes want and destitution." These were noble words uttered a generation since; but there is still equal need and greaternecessity to proclaim them from every urban and rustic steeple in the kingdom.

Is there not the wisdom of stern truth in the following citation from Mr. Usher's letters, nay, greater necessity now, when we have but six million acres arable, than then, when we had ten millions and not more than half the mouths to feed? viz.:—"There is no fact connected with the subject I am now treating that I wish to bring so prominently before the notice of my readers as this—that arable land produces at least three times as much food as grass land; that it furnishes directly to the agricultural labourer five times as much employment, and indirectly, to all other portions of the community, an amount of employment and profit to which the proceeds of grass land bears no comparison."

When Mr. Usher wrote the above, I fear he was not a staunch. Free-Trader, or he would have seen that the first condition for remedying the evil he so justly complains of is perfect freedom of trade, or,

in other words, direct taxation.

If he had considered the fact that on an acre of bare rock in England he could, by building a cotton factory, produce on that one acre more food and employment for the people of this country, than thebest farmer on a thousand acres of the best land by agricultural operations, he would perhaps have came to a different conclusion.

# EXTRACT FROM ARTICLE IN "WESTMINSTER REVIEW," OCTOBER, 1882, BY MR. WM. LATTIMER:

THE IRISH LAND ACT AND THE ENGLISH LAND QUESTION.

The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881.

THE attempt to estimate the present and prospective value of the new Land Bill for Ireland is beset with great difficulty, but it may not be unprofitable, if it help us to obtain a proper appreciation of the past, present, and probable future of the great Land Question, not of Ireland alone, but of Great Britain also. Landlordism, as an institution, has been for some time back upon its trial, as it were, at the bar of public necessity, not only in Ireland, but in almost every country in Europe, and the belief is spreading and gaining strength, that it is a mischievous parasitical growth, needing to be pruned down, and, it may be, even eradicated, should any remedy less thorough prove insufficient to counteract its injurious influence. Landlordism of the existing type is neither a time-honoured nor a popular institution. cannot boast a growth or existence contemporaneous with that of the British nation, for it is a modern development, and only derives its nourishment at the expense of the fruit-producing realities to which it clings; and though it has gained a firm hold of its victims, it may become necessary to sever this hold, and rescue them from its deaden-To prove that landlordism is of a comparatively modern ing grasp. growth, we may turn to Ireland (where its baneful influence is most conspicuous), and we find that at the time of the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the English throne Ireland was free from landlordism. At that time, and to nearly the end of Elizabeth's reign, the land of Ireland was cultivated by the people in common. But this system was not allowed to last. Landlordism was already in existence in England, and was causing revolt after revolt of the impoverished labourers, and, of course, the Irish communal land system, as something "un-English," was put down. Many of the Irish people were meanwhile dispersed, their lands were taken from them and given to English and Scotch settlers, and thus came about the establishment, for the first time, of landlordism in Ireland, the spoilation of the poor lrish cultivators, and the creation of a debt of hatred against England, which has gone on increasing even unto this day.\*

<sup>\*</sup> See Green's "History of the English People," chap. vii., p. 444.

Before entering on the main subject of this article, let us glance at the so-called great work of the last session of Parliament, the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881. Of this "message of peace" to the Irish people, we venture to express our apprehension that, like its predecessor of 1870, it will prove in its results another encouragement to

expectations which are never to be realised.

To go to the origin of the new lrish Land Act, we may take a letter by Mr. Bright, published a few years ago, in which he expressed the conviction that "the great Land Question was the question of the immediate future," to which he invited the young men of the rising generation to devote their study and attention. This invitation, though late in the day, as many (notably, the late John S. Mill) had been ventilating the subject before, was soon responded to. Some, who had devoted years of study to the subject, and who had come to the conclusion that no reform in our land-system except State-proprietorship, would prove just to every interest, were not encouraged by the tribune of the people, while others, who took up the clap-trap phrase, "Free-Trade in Land," were hailed by him as the new saviours of the nation. The late Joseph Kay, Q.C., possibly in response to Mr. Bright's invitation, published a series of letters, in a dailypaper, advocating this remedy of Free Trade in Land. These letters, upon Mr. Kay's death were collected and published in bookform by C. Kegan Paul & Co., in 1879; and when this book appeared it contained a short preface by Mr. Bright, which, concluded thus:-- "It (the book) may prove a legacy of much good from one who is now withdrawn from amongst us, if it hasten the time when, in addition to the many gains of freedom of which we justlyboast, we may boast also of the freedom of the soil." In this extract we can see how Mr. Bright was misled, by Mr. Kay's special pleading, to believe-and announce to the public-that if we get power to buy the land out of the private control of a duke, and sell it over again into the private control of a dozen Sir Gorgius Midases, we shall then be able to add to our many boasts of freedom, "that also of freedom of the soil!" As Mr. Bright yielded to this fallacy, it is not difficult to understand how the Cabinet, of which he is so distinguished a member, should follow suit; and hence, possibly, Mr. Gladstone's endorsement of the Free Trade in Land programme in his speech at Dalkeith; also the germ of Free Trade in Land as one feature in the Irish Land Act—a feature which, as the thin edge of the wedge, may produce unexpected and disastrous results. This part of the question, however, we shall deal with further on.

The poor Irish (and other) cultivators have been praying for generations for fixed rents, but so far to no purpose. Landlordism, Sisyphus-like, doomed to keep rolling its stones up to the mountain-top, has at length completed this labour; and now, when the stone is fated to roll down again, a flat of Parliament has gone forth which attempts to fix the stone upon the

summit of the mountain! In other words, land-rents are now at the highest, and they must gradually decline. No Act of Parliament can permanently prevent this, in the face of the tidal wave of surplus land-produce which is annually flowing into England from every quarter of the globe (a tidal wave which no Dame Partington need now attempt, by corn-law or "fair-trade" brooms, to sweep back); and hence our declaration that the Act giving fixity of rent has come too late for the Irish cultivator, and too soon for the lasting interests of the general public. For, if agricultural rents, at their present figures, were to be fixed for fifteen years in England, Ireland, and Scotland, the only class that would be benefited, besides the lawyers, would be the landlords. The new Irish Land Act then, in its attempt to give fixity of rent, will not prove a "message of peace to Ireland," or a benefit to the cultivators of its soil, as its promoters honestly enough expected; but it may prove a "message of mercy" to the landholders, and save them from so rapid a reduction of rents as foreign competition must shortly and inevitably necessitate. The most prudent course therefore, under the circumstances, for Irish cultivators to take might be to abstain from rushing precipitately into court, to have a "fair rent" fixed for fifteen years, because in two or three years events may prove that even "a Griffith's valuation" is too high a rent for agricultural land in Ireland.

Then, coming to the clauses for facilitating emigration, we are glad to see that they contain a "message of mercy" to starving cultivators—an offer, in fact, to assist them to transfer their labour from (and that is rack-rented to land that is not; but is it not bad political economy to encourage the emigration of our wealth producers? Would it not be far better for the nation to offer every facility (and pay a large bounty even) to induce those landholders who are mere wealth-consumers to emigrate? What a relief to depressed England would it be at the present moment, if every individual holder of its aggregate of 75,000,000 acres were to receive an equivalent number of acres in that recently discovered new Garden of Eden. Manitoba? But, alas! a free-trading English Liberal Government shows itself still wedded to protection when monopolist landholders are justly assailed, and continues to countenance their private taxation of the people through their monopoly. This Government last Session passed a measure to put an end to eviction, without compensation, in Ireland; but the House of Lords would have none of it. In a similar emergency, when people in Ireland were starving, and Sir Robert Peel had not got the Corn Laws repealed, he especially/opened the ports to stay the famine! When the House of Lords refused to pass the Abolition of Purchase (Army) Bill, Mr. Gladstone, by Royal prerogative, made it the law of the land; but he made no attempt, when the Compensation for Disturbance Bill of last Session was rejected by the same House, to stay the evictions in Ireland, which were rendering thousands both homeless and penniless!

Leaving the new Irish Land Act (as an act of concession some half century behind the requirements of the times) to the logic of facts. and recording our belief that, probably, another ten years will render it as obsolete as the Land Act of 1870 has already become, we turn to our main subject—the English Land Question. This has become "the question of the immediate future," one of the most "burning questions" of the day, and the most important that has presented itself to practical Englishmen for solution for several generations. Were there more of the spirit of justice incorporated into our social system, this great land problem might easily narrow itself into one of a very simple form-viz., "How should the Government of England deal with the soil of England, so that the first great object of all good government might be secured—the due administration of justice, and, thus, the promotion of public good?"

The power hitherto possessed by landholders, through defective laws, to capitalise the increment of value added to the land by the labour of the cultivators, has by Parliament been voted unjust, and this power is, in principle, now taken from them by the Irish Land This reform having been accomplished, another, equally important, promises to come up for consideration-wiz., the justice and necessity of depriving landholders (or landholders and cultivators conjointly) of the power of capitalising the increment of value which accrues to land through the labour of that portion of the population which has no direct connection with the land; for the food of all labourers must come from the land; and thus it is that every labourer is adding to its marketable value so long as we continue the practice of permitting land to be a marketable article.

Then, turning to the remedy recommended by others—peasantproprietorship—the same difficulty and injustice meet us at the very outset. This remedy would give to peasants a share in that monopoly of the produce of the soil which peers have hitherto held; and this one-sided remedy some landholders are now advocating, to buttress their own tottering position possibly, for in offering to share their monopoly with the cultivators, they practically bid for the support of the latter to assist them in defending a system which empowers all land monopolists, great or small, privately to tax all other industrial

pursuits.

This remedy of peasant-proprietorship would also ignore the paramount claim of the whole labouring public, and would end, as will appear hereafter, in empowering the peasant-proprietors to appropriate or capitalise the increment of value that their land derived from the labour of the non-agricultural portion of the popula-The new Irish Land Act of 1881 legalises this injustice. practically divides the increment in the value of land between the landholders and the land cultivators, thus forming two classes, as it were, with a co-partnery. This is right, as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. Labour of every description adds its quota to the

marketable value of land, and a system which would exclude any contributor to the total capital of the co-partnery from participation

in its profits, is manifestly incomplete and unjust.

Non-agricultural labour adds to the value of land as much as, or more than, agricultural labour does, through the demand it creates for the cultivator's surplus food and raw produce, and it consequently follows that every description of labour has a right to its share in the co-partnery. Hence the injustice of making this comprise landholders and cultivators only, and of confiscating for their benefit the increment of value caused by manufacturing labour.

In 1836, the total land-rents of the kingdom amounted to about £45,000,000;\* recently they have increased to £67,000,000. This increase of about £22,000,000 has been caused almost entirely by the growth of manufactures, and this large sum may be set down as the interest of the total amount of share capital (or capitalised increase of the value of our agricultural land) which manufacturing labour has contributed to the great land co-partnery. So some means will have to be discovered for securing to these depositors their share of the profits of this co-partnery.†

Now, believing with Mr. J. S. Mill that State-proprietorship of land is the best remedy for the evils which beset private proprietorship, and the surest method for securing to every description of labour its just reward, we may proceed to submit for consideration a few statements, which point to the conclusion that direct State control of the land of the nation and of all its mineral contents, is the most reasonable and permanent solution of the great Land Question:-

I. As experience has demonstrated that even nominal personal proprietorship of the land empowers the holders to levy private taxation upon all its cultivators, also upon the public at large through these cultivators, land should never be either the nominal or real property of private persons, be they peasants or peers, but ought to be kept under the direct control and management of the State, for the promotion of the public good.

II. As land is the chief source of existence and comfort to the human family, there should never be any private or personal monopoly of this source of human existence and comfort: and no other plan except State-proprietorship can protect land from private monopoly, and the public from the many hardships which this monopoly inflicts

upon them.

III. As personal proprietorship, carried to its utmost possible

<sup>\*</sup> See Caird's "Landed Interest," p. 133. London: Cassell, Peter. and Galpin. 1878.

<sup>†</sup> The best means of securing this end is abolition of Customs and Excise taxes, these being the same for creating monopoly in capital employed in other industries as the private ownership of land does in that industry.

power of mischief, would enable any given territorialist or plutocratic family of a Daniel Dancer disposition to buy up eventually all the land in the kingdom, and to starve or enslave (if they could evict as their own parsimony might suggest) all the rest of the British nation, personal proprietorship of land is contrary to justice, reason, common sense, and the general welfare.

IV. As personal proprietorship of land enables the holders to make such arbitrary advances of rent, just or unjust, as their own avarice or extravagance may dictate or necessitate, it can become to land cultivators a tyranny which is incompatible with the most perfect cultivation of the soil, and thus produce unnecessary suffering and distress

among the general public.

V. As personal proprietorship of the land has compelled millions of our agriculturists to leave our shores to obtain bread in other lands, it is slowly but surely making this country more dependent upon other countries for a food-supply than is necessary; and as this condition might, during any sudden crisis, such as a war in or with the United States of America, produce a famine in England, personal proprietorship of land is inimical to the true interests of the country.

VI. As land is not the production of any individual, and as we may assume it exists for the good of all, it must be inexpedient to permit any one class of men to arrogate to itself the sole proprietorship of any of this land, to the exclusion and starvation of all other classes

of men.

VII. As it is the supreme duty of the Government of a country to provide for the effective administration of justice, and thus to ensure the greatest possible good for the greatest possible number, and as personal proprietorship of land provides the greatest wealth for the smaller number, and the greatest poverty for the greater number, it becomes the duty of the Government, as the head of the State, and the national executive, to take the land under its own direct control, to be managed as may be found most conductive to the public good.

Now, if the foregoing statements be logically fair and honest, it follows that neither peasant nor peers have any just ground for obtaining a personal monopoly of the soil, which would, or does, enable them to deal with it as they may think proper, or to regard the whole

of its productions as their exclusive property.

If one or two millions of peasant cultivators, on small farms of from five to twenty acres (good judges say that five acres of fair soil is as much as one tiller can manage properly), were cultivating the soil under this system as tenants of the Government, and investing their capital (i.e., their labour and experience) in the soil, its produce would be soon considerably increased. Should this result in reduced prices for the produce of the soil, the cultivator would be recouped by increased quantity per acre, and the abundance and cheapness of all the articles he would have to buy for his own use, so much so, that

every interest would participate in the benefit, and ere long private proprietorship of the fatherland would soon become as much a thing of the past as the Corn Laws now are, and be universally regarded as a system which could only have been tolerated in the darkest of dark ages. Smaller farms, too, would be multiplied as soon as their extra productiveness was demonstrated, and as more of the sense of justice

expressed in the phrase, "live and let live," became developed.

The result of the process of grouping small farms into larger ones is something like this—say five small farms of five acres each are to be made into one farm of twenty-five acres; this change divorces four families from the soil at once, and these must emigrate, if they can, or go to swell the pauper population in the cities. Before this change, the five families with five acres each might be paying ten shillings an acre as rent. This would yield £12 10s. annually to the landholder for the whole five farms, and if each cultivator raised produce of the value of £50, each would have £47 10s. annually, after paying the £2 10s. to the landholder in rent. These twenty-five acres would thus be supporting five families with some degree of comfort. But as soon as some economist suggests that the land would "pay better" if these twenty-five acres were all made into one farm, and, in his way, readily proves it by figures, the change is decided upon at once, for the figures show that it will certainly pay the landholder a bigger rent, whatever it may do to the four families who are evicted. to be sent adrift across the ocean, or to take their chance in the backslums of our cities, where the children soon begin to attract the attention of a HOME Secretary, by swelling the ranks of the street arabs. And all this spoilation and degradation is merely that these twenty-five acres may pay their landholder a bigger rent! The figures are clear enough, however, and may now be jotted down The produce of these twenty-five acres, with five cultivators, we have assessed at £50 per five acres. This makes £250 for the whole five farms. But the one family now in occupation of the whole cannot do so much justice to 25 as it could to five acres, and consequently there is a falling off in the annual produce from £250 to £200 say. Out of this the cultivator may be allowed £150, and there are £50 left as rent for the landholder. Thus the grouping has paid the remaining farmer better. It has tripled the one farmer's income and quadrupled the landholder's rent. This is very gratifying to both, and they never stop to inquire how their increased prosperity has affected that of the four ejected families, or how the diminution of the food supply will affect the community at large! And so the work of improvement (?) goes on. It is next discovered that a farm of 100 acres will pay better than four of 25 acres each. Three more farmers' families have to go away into the wilderness that the one left behind may divide the spoil with the landholder. Each 25-acre farm was producing £200 annually, and when grouped into one farm of 100 acres, the produce may become £600. Here again the food of the

public is diminished, and the price of it is enhanced; but the one farmer and the landholder have £600 to divide between them. The farmer of 25 acres had £150; now, as the farmer of 100 acres, he may be permitted to have £300, and the landholder has £300 for his rent, or another advance of 50 per cent. This 100 acres, then, which at one time—the time of "Sweet Auburn;" possibly—might be supporting twenty farmers' families, is now supporting only one, and with this result, it is producing little more than one-half of the food which it formerly produced when cultivated in five-acre farms.

In this manner, the work of this so-called improvement goes steadily on, the 100-acre farmers finally being swallowed up between the 500 to 1,000-acre farmers and the landholders, to the still further increase of their respective incomes, the still further diminution of the food-supply of the people, the still further depopulation of the agricultural districts, and the degradation of the evicted agriculturists. And where is it to end? Has this eviction and grouping to continue till we have farms of a million acres in extent, with only dukes, earls, &c., to farm them, and all the cultivation performed by steam, or turned into primitive pasture? What prices will horses bring then? The grouping of small farms made men cheap and horses dear! And has steam-ploughing to make a surplus population of horses the next probable politico-economical bugbear? It may come to this, that all our labouring population may have to expatriate themselves or be starved, for our HOME Secretary is too much occupied in determining how to punish "juvenile criminals," to have time to discover how they are manufactured! But by the time he has discovered what to do with our juvenile and other criminals, let us hope that some modern Ulysses will have grappled with that single-eyed monster, or modern Polyphemus (Landlordism), which has for so many generations been swallowing up the land of the people, to the multiplication of juvenile and adult criminals, and that the result of the strategy of the new Ulysses will be the diminution of our pauper and criminal population, by a restoration to them of the liberty, on rational terms, to make their own living by the cultivation of their ancestral acres.

Now, all the evils here depicted would be reduced to a minimum were the land held directly by the State. Rents being comparatively fixed, cultivators would have every inducement to cultivate their plots to the highest pitch of productiveness, no man daring to make them afraid of the spoilation of an advanced rent, or of his farm being added to another, to the aggrandisement of the landholder or of some neighbouring cultivator. Then, even though mechanical means were eventually found qualified to cultivate all our land and supersede human labour altogether, under State proprietorship the proceeds would go into the national exchequer, and the public would all share in the benefit.

Having given a brief sketch of the extremely questionable improve-

ment ensuing from the transforming of small into large farms, we will now glance at what others, who see the necessity of some reform in our land-system, are proposing as a remedy. Lord Sherbrooke settles the whole question so very summarily in the paper which he contributed to the Nineteenth Century, for November, 1880, on "Legislation for Ireland," by the one word "Law" that it is a pity he omitted to conclude with this quotation as a motto—

"Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the Law."

And by the advice of Bobby Lowe he asserts that in legislating for Ireland, the Government "must please pit, boxes, and gallery, and each of them without displeasing the other," oblivious possibly of some of his own legislative efforts, and certainly forgetful of the fact that all real legislation attempts the adjustment of the burdens which different interests have to bear, ever mitigating one overburdened interest by increasing (if no other course is open) the burden of another. This being so, legislation can seldom or never be such as "must please" all parties. Again, Lord Sherbrooke lays down the law of landlord and tenant in a rather superficial way, when he says, "They are the parties to a single contract, and they are nothing more. Whatever the lease into which they have entered binds them to do, they are bound to do, and they are bound to do nothing else." The deeper unwritten contract, which both landlord and tenant practically are bound to perform to the people-faithfully to utilise the land for the public good, Lord Sherbrooke utterly ignores, though, we suppose, he would admit that if any thoughtless landholder were to attempt to sink his holding or invite the sea to encroach upon it, to the loss of some thousands of acres, or an eastern county, say, that he might have more duck-shooting, the Government and the public would have something to say to him, to remind him that there was a deeper contract than the only one Lord Sherbrooke sees-the one existing between him and his tenant—and that he could not and should not waste the land he had charge of, it being really and truly not his, but the nation's.

# BRITISH TRADE.

In a recent issue of *The Times* there appeared a strange letter with the above heading, signed W. Farrer Eckroyd. The writer seems to ignore the following axiom: "It is the system of universal tariffs that is the grand root-cause of universal friction, by introducing (so to speak) sand, instead of oil, into the joints of the revolving shafts of the world's machinery." If you will allow me, I will deal with Mr. Eckroyd's letter, seriatim.

ist. As regards his "desire to see an import duty of 10 per cent. imposed on all foreign manufactures, and also on foreign food products." He would tax them, not for the purpose of protecting British manufactures, but to enable us better to bargain with countries, like

France, for the free admission of our own manufactures. This is a retrograde policy, and one, that if tried, he (Mr. Eckroyd) would probably be the first to cry out to be relieved from, so runious would be its effects. High duties bar out sellers, and sellers are buyers, so that by barring out one we bar out both, and so paralyse trade. A tax on a commodity, whether for protective or revenue purposes, means monopoly, and all monopolies are bad for the interests of the commonwealth.

and As regards taxing food, "not for the protection of British agriculture, but in order to transfer the growing of our food from those who will not take our manufactures in return to those who will, and to force the future movements of our capital, enterprise, and emigration into our undeveloped empire." This I would submit is an oft-exploded fallacy, a wanton wrong, a violation of natural laws, which must in the nature of things, bring bitter retribution upon the heads

of the people of any nation that adopts it, sooner or later.

3rd. Again, as regards bargaining, what right has a class of tradesmen on either side of the Channel to bargain away the birthright of the masses of their fellow citizens in such a way as to divide the spoil between them taken fraudulently from the latter? The plan proposed is just what the advocates of protection abroad would be pleased to see. They would say of us, See how England now acknowledges that Free Trade was wrong, for she has abandoned it and is retracing her steps, proving that we have been in the right all along, and she has been wrong.

4th. As to differential duties in favour of colonial as against foreign produce, this is another exploded fallacy which has been thoroughly thrashed out over and over again, and needs no comment from me.

Our Colonial Governments have themselves to blame for not having attracted immigrants, inasmuch as they did not adopt the Homestead Law of the United States, which grants 160 acres of land free on condition of building a hut and cultivating 10 per cent. in five

years, and becoming a naturalised American citizen.

This law is (as Mr. Cobden prophesied it would) virtually depopulating Europe in the interest of America, and not our Colonies. This law is carving out of the wilderness 60,000 fruitful farms, and enabling the United States to build from 8,000 to 10,000 miles of railway annually, and causing the United States to flourish in spite of her hostile tariffs, and would have done the same for the Colonies if the Governments had had the common sense and moral courage to adopt it years ago, in place of copying the absurd protective tariff system of the United States. Mr. F. Eckroyd would then have rejoiced to see tens of millions in our Colonies "taking sixteen times the value of our manufacture per head, as the people of the United States 10," in place of about two millions in Australia and about three to four millions in Canada. It is well known that nine out of every ten immigrants into the Dominion of Canada gravitate west-

ward to the United States as a consequence of the latter's beneficent Homestead Law; and Victoria, the most populous of our Australian

Colonies, only counts about 800,000 of a population.

5th. But as regards the assertion that we should be by a 10 per cent, revenue duty still the most liberal of all nations in our dealings with foreign imports. Suppose this to be true—which it is not—does it justify us in doing evil that good may come? In answer to this assertion I would submit the following quotation from *The Times* German correspondent's letter on German finance, which appeared in *The Times*, December 26th, 1878:—"While 13 per cent. of the British income and 25 per cent. of the French income is raised by direct taxation, 45 per cent. of the entire German revenue is raised in the same way."

Thus England sins against the principles of free trade in raising her Imperial revenue to the extent of 87 per cent., France to the extent of 75 per cent., and Germany 55 per cent.; of course this was before the late retrograde policy adopted by the German Government.

6th. But as regards the Australians being "sixteen times better customers per head than the Americans." This can only last until they have beggared the people by fostering artificially their manufacturing operations at the cost of a ruined agriculture, for they have not the Homestead Law to fall back upon like Americans. But what has America gained by her protective system? Nothing but a deadly civil war; and if it were not for the beneficent effects of her Homestead Law, she would have had another before now; and unless she effects a sweeping reform in her tariff system, she must, in the nature of things, have another before long. But what has she lost? lost her maritime commerce, her carrying trade: as a proof of this. she only, in manufactures, exported nine millions in one year, whilst we exported 127 millions. What would she gain if she abolished totally and immediately all her Customs and Excise duties? She would gain access to all the markets of the world, and become our most formidable rival in those markets. But to show how beautiful and harmonious Nature's laws are, we should be more than compensated for this rivalry in the outer world, by having free access to the fifty to one hundred millions of Anglo-American population in the United States to trade with without let or hindrance. The increased demand brought about by removing the baneful tariff system everywhere would be of such extent that over-production would be a thing of the past. Modern history is sufficient to prove the truth of this theory; only take the history of our own development of manufactures and commerce from 1846 to 1860—the cotton famine came in to check our prosperity on the latter date—this being the beneficent result of a partial adoption of Free Trade principles. What may we expect from the whole?

In reference to Mr. Bright's letter that has gone the round of the papers recently, in reply to the cry from 'the people of Bradford for his opinion on the question of Reciprocity versus Free Trade, it is

truly lamentable to witness the "Great Tribune" of the people shirking his duties as a Free Trader.

He throws the blame upon Providence, whilst he ought to know it is himself who keeps the people in ignorance by declining to introduce a Bill for repealing all the indirect taxes which operate in restraint of trade, manufacture, and agriculture, paralysing our industries all round. He can only refer us to a small sixpenny book written by Mongredien, who was hired for the purpose by the Cobden Club. What says the Financial Reformer on this book? Under the head of "A Professed Free Trader," it says: "We have been reading Mr. Mongredien's history of the Free Trade movement in England and are marvellously discontented therewith whenever it goes outside strict history."

If we know anything of Free Trade, Mr. Mongredien is yet "in the gale of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity," and very far indeed short of any true comprehension of the meaning of freedom of trade. It is very obvious that trade may be shackled, obstructed, or even prohibited, for many other reasons, and in many other ways, than for protection; and, without going into various other matters, we take leave to point out that a duty for revenue will produce all these effects just as surely as a duty for protection; but this Mr. Mongredien cannot see, and he calls our tariffs, which taxes spirits and tobacco 500 per cent., tea 50 per cent., and ordinary wine 100 per cent., a thoroughly Free Trade tariff.

What an abuse of language this is; from such freedom, Good Lord deliver us! If this be liberty, we wonder what bondage is like (See F. R., April 1, 1881)! The above extract deserves to be copied into every daily paper in the country, and I quite agree that a thorough Free Trade tariff is impossible, inasmuch as the word tariff implies that there is still a tax upon something traded in, whereas the term Free Trade means the extinction of all Customs and Excise tariffs or duties whatsoever.

This book is full of inaccuracies from beginning to end. We are sorry to say, whenever the writer departs from the strict record of events, and ventures an opinion of his own (or it may be of his employer), Mr. Mongredien has got hold of that old worn-out and oft-refuted "clap-trap" about "taxing luxuries"; and here again we take the liberty of quoting the Financial Reformer, which, quoting from page 174 of Mr. Mongredien's book, says that we are told that "Tobacco, wine, and spirits are articles of sheer luxury, and, therefore, fair objects of taxation."

"A Non-sequiter Master-Serjeant." We utterly deny your "therefore," tax all luxuries as you tax these, and you will simply destroy the trade of the world, and make the earning of a decent living (which is now difficult enough, Heaven knows!) altogether impossible. Half the world lives by furnishing luxuries to others, and are we all to be pauperised together? For, observe, the articles specified above are

as luxuries to thousands who never use them, and if the revenue is to be raised by taxing luxuries, you must tax all luxuries alike, that none may escape. Now let Mr. Mongredien cast his eyes round his own dining-room, and take stock of the luxuries on the table, worn by the guests, or on the walls, and suppose them to be taxed 500 per cent., and think what would become of it. He will see very soon, I think, that the fact of any commodity being a luxury is a fallacious, absurd, and impracticable reason for taxing it.

To return to Mr. Bright's assertion that "The home trade is bad mainly or entirely because our harvests have been bad for several years," and he goes on to say that "he believes the agricultural classes—owners and occupiers of land in the three kingdoms—have lost more than £150,000,000 through the great deficiency of our

harvests."

The right hon, gentleman does not say how many years of bad harvests it has taken to rob the agriculturists of this wealth, but we can inform him that the malt tax alone took out of the pockets of the consumers of butchers' meat, dairy produce, and beer, in two years (1877-8), no less than £58,000,000 unjustly and unnecessarily, in order to put £8,000,000 into the coffers of the revenue. What right have we to complain of the laws of a just and beneficent Providence when we tolerate, without a murmur, the action of such stupid human fiscal laws as these? Mr. Bright will say that this is an exaggeration; in fact he has already said so, and has been challenged to the criticism of the figures, but has declined the invitation.

Mr. Bright very truly says that depression in trade and manufacture go hand in hand with depression of agriculture. In this we agree.

But the remedy, he says, "will come with more sunshine and better yield from the land." Are we then to sit with our arms folded, idling and starving, as a people waiting until the sun will vouchsafe to shine on these islands, or till it pleases our law-makers to take off the millstones (Customs and Excise) that are handicapping us in the race of competition with the rest of the world?

He who refuses to grant the first condition (the repeal of all Customs and Excise), is quite as fit to be an inmate of a lunatic asylum as those who go in for reciprocity in the shape of retaliatory or countervailing duties; both are equally sinners against the principles

of Free Trade.

## FREE TRADE AND LAND NATIONALISATION.

At the conference of the Land Nationalisation Society, held at Westminster Palace Hotel last week, I seconded the following resolution:
—"That this meeting is of opinion that 'Free trade in land' would have no tendency to remove the vast evils resulting from land monopoly; and that by facilitating the extension of private owner-

ship in the land by the moneyed classes, it would most probably aggravate rather than diminish those evils." As one of those consistent and uncompromising Free Traders, it may be said how do I justify my action in supporting and seconding this resolution, inasmuch as it goes for putting into the hands of the Government, or the State, the most gigantic of monopolies—the land? My reply is this, that it is not proposed that the land shall be monopolised by the Government as owner, but only as trustee for the equal benefit of the community as a whole; and as was shown by the previous resolutions and discussion, landed property is not property in the same sense as other property. Landed property not being created by human labour or ingenuity, but being the gift of the Creator, and being limited in quantity, it was given to the whole of His people without respect to persons or classes. The question is how to utilise it for this end? My experience and observation for the last 50 years teaches me that the only way is to have perfect freedom of trade in all the products of the land and labour, and if this cannot be obtained without first nationalising the ownership of land, then I say the sooner the nationalisation of the land is achieved the better for all classes. As Dr. Clark shows in his able pamphlet just issued, it can be done without injustice to any living person. We need go no further back into the past history of this country to prove the utter folly of our present policy than the year of our Lord 1840. It was not until the year 1846 that the Landholding Parliament would submit to the granting of the first instalment of Free Trade in the repealing of the Corn and Provision Laws; and then it was done under the pressure of public opinion, induced by the threat of a direful and devastating famine in Ireland, which in less than two years by pestilence, emigration, and famine swept away no less than three millions of our fellow citizens from Ireland alone, besides those who went from England and Scotland. happened since that eventful time I have not time now to recapitulate. Suffice it to say that the landed proprietors have continued to hold on and assert their right (so-called) as owners of the people's inheritance, without recognising their duties to the State, and the upshot is that their land is now slipping from under their feet as in the nature of things it was sure to do under such a policy. To show the logical sequence of such a selfish policy, I made a calculation the other day of the loss to this country and the gain to the United States of America resulting from emigration. The Archbishop of Canterbury told us the other day that our people were emigrating to America at the rate of Well, assuming his figures to be correct, the 200,000 per annum. Americans as a nation gain by this transaction £400,000,000 value in human' labour reckoned as follows, viz. :- it takes 31 men to produce 100 acres of wheat, average, say, 20 bushels to the acre, 2,000 bushels at 3s. 6d. per bushel, £350, i.e., £100 per man per annum. At this rate 200,000 emigrants enrich America to the extent of say £,20,000,000 a year, or, capitalised at 5 per cent., £400,000,000; and this is not for

one year only but almost every year, and this is the amount we lose as a nation from the folly of turning our tillage into pasture or deer forests or game preserves, as the result of private property in land enjoyed without insisting on the holders performing a corresponding duty so as to ameliorate the condition of manufacturing, agricultural, and trading industry that they (the latter) shall not be garotted by Customs and Excise duties. The Echo of the 5th inst., states that "The exact number of immigrants into New York last year from Europe was 455,681, and unofficial advices from other ports justify the assumption that over 700,000 foreigners went to the States last year to make it their permanent home." If this be a fact, according to the above calculation Europe contributes to America as a free gift in the shape of human labour alone, without reckoning anything for the money they take in their pockets and the value of their baggage, no less than a capital sum of £1,400,000,000 per annum. Can it be wondered that America is going a-head of us in spite of her hostile tariffs. If this Emigration had been done under Universal Free Trade, what a blessing

it would result in both for us in Europe and her in America!

One word more as to the question of valuing the land in Ireland for the purpose of settling a fair rent. The Marquis of Waterford, referring to Griffiths' valuation, said "that the scale of prices on which it was made was much lower in the years preceding 1852 when the Act was passed. Since then the development of railways, crosschannel steamers, and free trade in corn have greatly altered the conditions of agriculture in Ireland, so that, while the prices of all kinds of produce have increased enormously since the valuation was made, & c.," and then he refers to the Duke of Richmond and Gordon's commission reports. (P. 8.) There it is stated "the circumstances under which the valuation was made are set forth in evidence of several witnesses, and it is clearly proved that the annual value, as set forth in that document, was not intended to represent and did not represent at the date the rental value of the property. The increase which has taken place in the prices of all kinds of agricultural produce by the introduction of railway, steam, and other developments since the valuation was made, is so great that, even after making allowance for the increased cost of production, we are led to the conclusion that the valuation is not a trustworthy guide to the present rental value." Again Lord Lifford says :- "The price of the chief articles of Irish produce have doubled, or nearly so since the time of Griffiths' Valuation, and most of the railways have been made in Ireland. To show how this last has affected prices; at the terminus of a railway with which I am connected, the prices of many articles of the produce of the usual Irish small farmer about doubled when the line was opened, remaining stationary at a town eighteen miles off." (See Letters to the Editor of the Times, January 9th, 1882). Thus showing conclusively how true it is what Mr. H. George says in his excellent book "Progress and Poverty," that whatever development the country may undergo

for the benefit of the whole people, under present Land Laws, the benefit is all merged into rent, and it is pretty plain from the above

extracts that the landlords intend it to be so.

I hope and trust that our efforts to galvanise this question into life, if they do not effect the object aimed at directly, may awaken a spirit of enquiry, and enlist the sympathy of that "unerring instinct" (which every election has developed since the ballot was established) in the people, guiding them in the choice of representatives, and as the Westminster Review says, quoting Cobden, they may indirectly effect the conversion of society to the three great principles logically connected in argument and intimately blended in sentiment, viz., Free Trade, Economy, and Peace.

### THE EMIGRANTS GONE.

Bleeding Ireland! A hundred thousand of her people emigrated themselves away last year. An equal crowd will go off this year. Count the loss. I have said many a time before to-day that every man and woman raised in Ireland up to puberty, say 18 years of age, costs somebody in Ireland at least one hundred pounds. Taking their first cost all round at that low figure on 100,000, here in the first instance is a national, total loss of £10,000,000; to pay their passage to America at £5, £500,000; pocket-money at landing, £5 each, £500,000. Eleven million pounds sterling transferred from impoverished Ireland to thriving America is something to take note of.

I am strongly fortified in the following statistical report from the American office in Washington, which shows us that a million emigrants from outside nations last year enriched the United States to the extent of two thousand millions sterling. As Ireland furnished one-tenth of that enormous wealth to America last year, and will furnish muite as much this year, let Ireland have some return for it all in her

hour of need. The report:-

"The cash capital of the immigrants arriving in America during the past year is estimated at £17 per head. The value of the inland railway tickets purchased by immigrants this year would amount to £1,200,000. A million immigrants, averaging £17 each in cash, means £17,000,000 added to the cash capital of the land, and if the estimated value of immigrants (£200 each to the working capital of the country) be correct there is £2,000,000,000."

#### THE TRUE REMEDY FOR IRISH GRIEVANCES.

There can be no true or permanent remedy for Ireland's woes that does not include and carry with it a remedy for the ills of the whole empire.

Ireland being an integral portion of the British Empire, Ireland's interests must be England's interests, and vice versa. In order to

render the greatest happiness to the greatest number there should not be one law for one class or section of the Empire, and another law for

another class or section of it.

The order of the day for centuries has been confiscation. In the days of "savagery" the good old rule, the simple plan, that he should take who have the power, and he should "keep who can," was carried out by the operation of physical violence; the present generation is more advanced, and adopt mental sharp-practice for carrying out the "good old rule." This especially applies to "Home Rule," but, internationally, we are still brought face to face with physical violence, with improved modes for destroying life and property. Now, in my humble opinion, if this be the only progress we have made towards modern civilisation, it says little for man as an improving or improvable animal. It is true we have had our Stephenson, our Watts, our Arkwrights, &c., whose inventions have enabled us to cultivate the arts of peace; aided by these, and the speculative spirit of our race, it has pleased the Great Creator to enable us to place an iron band round the earth so that we have comparatively annihilated time and distance, and so converted the inhabitants of the remotest corners of the world into our neighbours, so to speak.

One of the great commandments says, "Love thy neighbour as thyself." But this is a hard problem if my neighbour declines to love me in return. For the solution of this poblem I need hardly say that I would refer you to the Sermon on the Mount. Would to God I could also refer you to the sayings and doings of our present rulers and legislators. Now, without regard to the merits or demerits of either political party, judging a tree by its fruits, we are bound to say that our legislative science, or the science of statesmanship in this great country has not kept pace with the other sciences. I quite agree with the writer who says, "A fig for a statesman who has not a soul above that of physical force for keeping the peace either nationally or internationally." "When a nation's ways please the

Lord he maketh even its enemies to be at peace with it."

But you will ask what has this to do with the question of Irish grievances? We shall come to that presently. If time and space permitted I might go back to the savage times of Edward II. Quoting from T. Moore (a great Irish writer) we find that "eight thousand marks were offered to King Edward I. provided that he would grant the free enjoyment of the Laws of England to the whole body of the Irish inhabitants. The King was well-inclined, but the Barons would not take the petition into their consideration. The aristocratic ascendancy of that date could not easily surrender their privilege of oppression." Leland (another Irish writer on history) says at this period "The great English settlers found it more to their interests that many of those whose lands they coveted should be considered as aliens, that they might be furnished for their petty wars by arbitrary exactions, and in their rapines and

massacres be freed from the terrors of a rigidly impartial tribunal." Such was the result of the period. The rejection of a petition so humble and so reasonable was followed as a matter of course by one of those daring rebellions into which the revenge of an insulted people naturally breaks forth. The MacCarties, The O'Brions, and all the other Macs and O's (who have been kept on the alert by similar causes ever since) flew to arms." On the same page a verse by one of our celebrated poets appears as follows:

By Mac and O you'll always know True Irishmen they say; For if they lack both O and Mac, No Irishmen are they.

I will not dwell longer on the ancient history of the confiscation policy adopted in Ireland. To illustrate the modern confiscation policy I have no hesitation in quoting the late Charles Tennant. I maintain that "in Ireland the whole agricultural body, consisting of landlords, tenant-farmers, and labourers, is subject to a heavy tax which compresses and limits most of the productive operations, and the most profitable way of farming is as good asprohibited. Barley and turnip lands pay in Ireland the same amount of excise on the grain produced as in England. This amounts to nearly £5 an acre on medium land. The consequence is the greater part of England and Ireland is kept out of cultivation.

Hence the large number of grazing farms employing little or no labour, and the small number of arable farms paying wages. Hence the innumerable small holdings and mud cabins, the non-employment

and starvation of the peasantry.

These are the direct and indirect results of excised, and arrested agriculture. The malt or beer tax, the tobacco tax, the tea and coffee tax, &c., are at the root of the evils that are afflicting not only Ireland but England also, and this is the sum and substance of modern confiscation policy.

So intimately connected are the interests of trade and agriculture that they may be taken to be concurrent, for all experience shows that a state of prosperity or depression in the one is the same in the

other.

It, therefore, can need no words to prove that by relieving tradefrom all taxes or other impositions or impediments, no injury can be inflicted on land. As far as experience goes, it is conclusive of this truth, and no further examples can be wanting than have been already afforded in the repeal of the corn laws, and in those Customs and Excise duties which have been remitted.

I fully corroborated, from personal observation on the spot, what the People's Blue Book says in page 904, that "as far as my opportunities of observation went, there is not the smallest ground for attributing prosperity in Ulster or any part of it to the tenant right. On the contrary, wherever there is prosperity in Ulster it is in spite of this custom. It was only that portion of Ulster which was near the

seat of manufacturing industry that showed prosperity.

In the present insecurity of life and property no prosperity can be expected, and the people are led astray from ignorance of the cause of the evil by the worse than ignorant set of lawyers, or briefless barristers, who have their own ends in view, regardless of the welfare of the starving millions, and who encourage the people to cry for repeal, which is really High Treason in disguise. An Imperial Parliament can never exist in Ireland, as long as an Imperial Parliament exists in England.

There never was a time when England and Ireland wanted each other's help, as they want it just now, for their mutual benefit. There never was a time when England was so willing and so able to make concessions to Ireland as now. What I said ten or eleven years ago I say now; and it applies to the present time just as it did then. All the attempts of the present Government to relieve the distress in Ireland have completely failed, either from misunderstanding the cause of distress, or from unwillingness to apply the only effectual remedy. The same cause is operating in the same way in England, Wales, and Scotland as in Ireland; the only difference is in the greater counteracting force in Great Britian than in Ireland, which prevents the effects being so clearly visible in the one country as in the other.

The present generation of landholders are reaping the bitter fruits of the selfish policy of their forefathers about two hundred years ago, when they shifted the burden of taxation from their own shoulders on to those of industry. They had then the sole power of making the laws, and we now witness the truth of the doctrine that "the sins of the fathers will be visited upon their children till the third and fourth generation."

The grounds of Irish misery have never been clearly stated in Parliament. They are neither religious nor political. They are economical, physical, and agricultural. The Irish people want work, wages, and food. They are deprived of those by law; and Parliament prescribes for their relief—the abolition of the Protestant Irish Church. This falling, they prescribe (at a guess) for the patient, a Land Bill. This policy I had the honour of denouncing eleven years ago, and I now venture to denounce it again, as entirely inadequate to the case. In the meantime I have written and spoken incessantly with a view to keep the question before the public, and to show where it is that the shoe does really pinch.

I have made a calculation showing that the malt tax (now a beer tax) alone was responsible for an annual waste of resources to Great Britain and Ireland of no less than fifty-eight millions sterling, or more, namely, £58,554,865. Now, inasmuch as Ireland is almost purely agricultural in its industry, this waste, being mostly in dairy

produce and butchers' meat, must tell with two-fold force upon her as compared to Great Britain. The farmer requires liberty of culture

in the raising of crops as well as in disposing of them.

Why should not the British and Irish farmer be free to grow tobacco as well as his rivals in America, or on the Continent? Mr. Gatty, in his able letter to his Grace the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, says:—"There is another point in which the legislature can do much to assist the British agriculturist in his competition with America, by granting as much freedom in the choice of his crops as the American farmer enjoys. At present, for fiscal reasons, the cultivation of tobacco in England is illegal, a restriction which is very damaging to the well-being of the English and Irish farmer in competing with his American competitor. It is the most profitable crop the American farmer produces, and in portions of their country most resembling our's in their agricultural condition, wheat never does so well as after a crop of tobacco."

Any farmer who attempts to grow tobacco in England is liable to a penalty of £100, and to be imprisoned as a felon. Is this freedom

of trade? Is it just, right, or moral? Not a bit of it.

The great reason why the good effects of the repeal of the malt tax is neutralised, is that under the tax, and by reason of it, the malting of barley had for a long course of years been drifting into the hands of a few large brewers and all the small malting-houses were destroyed, consequently not a bit of malt could be obtained for home brewing in a retail way, so that the farmers will have to build new malt-kilns before they can prevent the repeal becoming a dead letter, and of no avail for ameliorating the condition of themselves and their customers (the consumers.)

In order to illustrate the way that the wages of the labourers, and the incomes of professional men or persons of limited means are confiscated in order to lighten the burdens of the rich I would refer you to

the anecdote. (See page 145.)

Now we are made aware of the suicidal policy of raising our Imperial revenue by indirect taxation.

When shall we open our eyes to so perilous a situation?

More than a million and a half of acres have gone out of cultivation in Ireland alone, for the last twenty years yielding no employment, or food, for the peasantry. One hundred acres of arable land employs three men, two boys, and six horses, whereas one hundred acres of

grass land only employ one man and a boy.

Mo e than one and a half millions of acres gone out of cultivation in Ireland alone. Assuming that only three pairs of human hands and six horses be thrown out of employment to each hundred acres, it is equivalent to throwing out of bread 45,000 labourers, and 90,000 horses out of employment. This is no exaggeration. It was put down eleven years ago, when I pointed out (in a paper I read at the Social Science Congress) that :—"When the Chancellor of the Exchequer

pronounces from his place in the House of Commons the continuance of the malt tax he practically declares war upon Ireland, and in fact upon the whole population of Britain, except the small handful of men, the gin palace owners, or, in other words, brewers and distillers."

The present Government in legislating for Ireland's ills are repeating the mistake they made in 1870. Muddling and meddling between class and class in one section of the Empire, whilst neglecting that policy which would affect the whole for mutual good, reminds one of the old story of "Nero fiddling whilst Rome is burning." If the Empire prospers Ireland prospers. If disaster comes through want of employment, Ireland will be the first to feel it; and the same policy as they pursued when in 1868 they came into power with an overwhelming majority, will land them in the same disaster as they experienced in 1874. In 1868 they deserted the Free Breakfast-table policy for the Irish Church and Land Questions, and the result was that in 1874 they lost their power. The same seed now sown will bring forth the same fruit in due season. If they still persist in miserable palliatives, lopping off a branch here and a branch there, in place of uprooting the "Upas tree" the nation is doomed, and the State of Ireland is the Nemesis.

## TAXING LUXURIES.

If the policy of taxing luxuries be sound, it should (in order to be just and fair), be laid upon the luxuries of the rich as well as those of the poor. For instance, such luxuries as costly buildings, fine furniture, luxurious equipages, statues, pictures, pleasure gardens, and yachts, and also the personal luxuries, such as grapes, melons, and other hothouse fruit, and though last not least, the inequality of tax between the rich man's cigar and the poor man's pipe of tobacco, the former being a tax of 10 per cent. whilst the latter is 500 per cent.

Chapter 2nd, book 3 (George), page 150 :—"If one man owned all the land accessible to any community, he could, of course, demand any price or condition for its use that he saw fit; and, as long as his ownership was acknowledged, the other members of the community would have but death or emigration as the alternative to submission to

his terms."

Let every action in politics be dictated by a determination that every movement made shall be directed to its legitimate end and object, which is the vindication of right, without the infliction of wrong upon any individuals.

Shakespere has told us that, "The highest mark of the intelligent

creature is that of looking before and after."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Given a race of beings having like claims to pursue the objects of their desires—given a world adapted to the gratification of these

desires—a world into which such beings are similarly born, and it unavoidably follows that they have equal rights to the use of this world. For if each of them 'has freedom to do all that he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other,' then each of them is free to use the earth for the satisfaction of his wants, provided he allows

all others the same liberty. .

"Equity, therefore, does not permit property in land. For if one portion of the earth's surface may justly become the possession of an individual, and may be held by him for his sole use and benefit, as a thing to which he has an exclusive right, then other portions of the earth's surface may be so held, and eventually the whole of the earth's surface may be so held; and our planet may thus lapse altogether into private hands. Observe now the dilemma to which this leads. Supposing the entire habitable globe to be so enclosed, it follows that, if the landowners have a valid right to its surface, all who are not landowners, have no right at all to its surface. Hence, such can exist on the earth by sufferance only. They are all trespassers. Save by permission of the lords of the soil they can have no room for the soles of their feet.

"It can never be pretended that the existing titles to landed property legitimate. Should anyone think so, let him look into the Violence, fraud, the prerogative of force, the claims of superior cunning—these are the sources to which those titles may be traced. The original deeds were written by the sword, rather than with the pen; not lawyers but soldiers were the conveyancers: blows were the current coin given in payment; and for seals, blood was used in preference to wax. Could valid claims be thus constituted? Hardly. And if not, what becomes of the pretensions of all subsequent holders of estates so obtained? Does sale or bequest generate a right when it did not previously exist? Would the original claimants be nonsuited at the bar of reason because the thing stolen from them had changed hands? Certainly not. And if one transfer can give no title, can many? No; though nothing be multiplied for ever, it would not produce one. Even the law recognises this principle. Whether it may be expedient to admit claims of a certain standing is not the point. We have here nothing to do with considerations of conventional privilege or legislative convenience. We have simply to inquire what is the verdict given by pure equity in this matter. And this verdict enjoins a protest against every existing pretension to the individual possession of the soil; and dictates the assertion that the right of mankind at large to the earth's surface is still valid; all deeds. customs, and laws notwithstanding.

"Not only have present land tenures an indefensible origin, but it is impossible to discover any mode in which land can become private property. Cultivation is commonly considered to give a legitimate title.

"Probably some will regard the difficulties inseparable from

individual ownership of the soil as caused by pushing to excess a doctrine applicable only within rational limits. This is a very favourite style of thinking with some. There are people who hate anything in the shape of exact conclusions; and these are of them. According to such, the right is never in either extreme, but always half-way between the extremes. They are continually trying to reconcile Yes and No. If and buts and excepts are their delight. They have so great a faith in 'the judicious mean' that they would scarcely believe an oracle if it uttered a full-length principle.

But it behoves such to recollect that ethical truth is as exact and as peremptory as physical truth; and that in this matter of land tenure the verdict of morality must be distinctly yea or nay. Either men have a right to make the soil private property, or they have not. There is no medium. We must choose one of the two positions. There can be no half-and-half opinion. In the nature of things the

fact must be either one way or the other.

"If men have not such a right, we are at once delivered from the several predicaments we have pointed out. If they have such a right, then is that right absolute; indeed, not on any pretence to be violated. If they have such a right, then is His Grace of Leeds justified in warning off tourists from the Ben Mac-Dhui, the Duke of Athole in closing Glen Tilt, the Duke of Buccleugh in denying sites to the Free Church, and the Duke of Sutherland in banishing the Highlanders to make room for sheep-walks. If they have such a right, then it would be proper for the sole proprietor of any kingdom-a Jersey or Guernsey for example—to impose what regulations he might choose on its inhabitants—to tell them that they should not live on his property, unless they professed a certain religion, spoke a particular language, paid him a specified reverence, adopted an authorised dress, and conformed to all other conditions he might see fit to make. If they have such a right, then there is truth in that tenet of the ultra-Tory school that the landholders are the only legitimate rulers of a country—that the people at large remain in it only by the landowners' permission, and ought consequently to submit to the landowners' rule, and respect whatever institutions the landowners set up. There is no escape from these inferences. necessary corrollaries to the theory that the earth can become individual property. And they can only be repudiated by denying that theory. After all, nobody does implicitly believe in landlordism. We hear of estates being held under the King-that is the State : or of their being kept in trust for the public benefit; and not that they are the inalienable possessions of their nominal owners. Moreover, we daily deny landlordism by our legislation. Is a canal, a railway, or a turnpike-road to be made? We do not scruple to seize just as many acres as may be requisite, allowing the holders compensation for capital invested.

"No doubt great difficulties must attend the resumption, by man-

kind at large, of their rights to the soil. The question of compensation to the existing proprietors is a complicated one—one that perhaps cannot be settled in a strictly equitable manner. Had we to deal with the parties who originally robbed the human race of its heritage, we might make short work of the matter. . . . Meanwhile we shall do well to recollect that there are others besides the landed class to be considered. In our tender regard for the vested interests of the few, let us not forget that the rights of the many are in abeyance, and must remain so, as long as the earth is monopolised by individuals. Let us remember, too, that the injustice thus inflicted on the masses of mankind is an injustice of the gravest nature. The fact that it is not so regarded proves nothing. In early phases of civilisation even homicide is thought lightly of. . . . But our civilisation is only partial. It may by-and-bye be perceived that equity utters dictates to which we have not yet listened; and men may then learn that to deprive others of their rights to the use of the earth is to commit a crime inferior only in wickedness to the crime of taking away their lives or personal liberities.

"Briefly reviewing the argument, we see that the right of each man to the use of the earth, limited only by the like rights of his fellow-man, is immediately deducible from the law of equal freedom. We see that the maintenance of his right necessarily forbids private property in land. On examination all existing titles to such property turn out to be invalid; those founded on reclamation inclusive. It appears that not even an equal apportionment of the earth amongst its first inhabitants could generate a legitimate proprietorship. We find that, if pushed to its ultimate consequences, a claim to exclusive possession of the soil involves a landowning despotism. We further find that such a claim is constantly denied by the enactments of our Legislature. And we find, lastly, that the theory of the co-heirship of all men to the soil is consistent with the highest civilisation; and that, however difficult it may be to embody that theory in fact, equity

sternly commands it to be done."

HERBERT SPENCER, "Social Statics."

Extract from World, 29th July, 1882:—"Property in Land is impossible, and even the State cannot do the impossible. Property in anything that Labour creates is a safe right, since the capacity of Labour being limitless, monopoly and tyranny are impossible under unconditional freedom of commerce."

# EXTRACT FROM MR. RUFUS USHER'S ARTICLE IN THE "BANBURY GUARDIAN."

What I propose is simply to carry on our rotation of crops, not only from cereal to cereal, and from cereals to root crops, but from grass to grain, and from grain to grass, without which no further progress will be made in this country in the production of food. The barren soil must be converted into fertile fields of grain, and the worn, weedy, arable must go back for a limited period to a state of com-

parative rest.

Having already assumed that we have forty million acres of good ' land, half of which may be supposed to produce grass, and half grain, with a view of keeping within reasonable bounds, I will base my calculation on 30 million acres only, and suppose this equally divided between corn land and grass. The calculation then will be made on the supposition that once in 30 years the 15 million acres of grass land shall be converted to arable, and then back again for a period of 30 years to grass, and that the change be made continuous. this principle of a perpetual change every 30 years, there would be no such thing as a worn out exhausted soil, unless through very gross neglect in management. The alternate 30 years rest of the soil under the turf, and the succeeding 30 years enormous production of corn as the result of the 30 years rest, is the most practical and successful arrangement that can be made in agriculture. Even during the 30 years' undisturbed rest of the soil, whilst it is preparing to fill the earth with plenty, the surface is producing food for cattle, and realising a small return both for owner and occupier. In the one instance, it is in a state of partial torpor, assuming a condition related to the lower forms of life, and suited more to the requirements of the uncivilised races, but when brought into active cultivation, an almost preternatural result is produced.

On the system I suggest, taking 30 acres as a sufficient quantity on which to make a calculation, the result will be as follows. From 30 acres of our present arable land we produce usually in 30 years, seven crops of wheat, which estimated at supposed average of 28 bushels per acre is 5,580 bushels. From 30 acres broken up pasture, twelve crops of wheat can be produced in the 30 years, which estimated at 48 bushels per acre is 17,280 bushels, making the balance in favour of the latter 11,400 bushels. The estimate of twelve crops of wheat in the 30 years cannot be considered extravagant, because after the two or three first years, when oats only can be sown with safety, owing to the extreme fertility of the fresh soil, two or three consecutive crops of wheat may be obtained with success, and much more frequently afterwards during the 30 years, than on the old worn arable. In respect then to wheat cultivation on the principle of a continuous rotation from grass to grain and back again from grain to grass at every interval of 30 years, the annual produce from 15 million acres would be 36 million quarters, making about 12 millions above our consumption. If any great error should be supposed to exist in these figures there is surely a very large margin to supply any discrepancy that may be apparent; the calculation extending only to less than two-fifths

our entire area of land.

